

11-12

Column 3

he came to his Vineyard privacy

Tisbury. The Prince's...
Britain's Prince...
Martha's Vineyard...
enjoy the island...
privacy, according...
"She knows it...
the very few places...
where she could...
be hard to find...
the press."

Occupied Jerusalem
AFP — Israel's reaction to...
ambassador to...
States, who said...
was her house...
attention is to...
normal life, to...
Minister Shimon...
fourists do."

Malaysian group urges...
ties with Israel
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Israel in a new sign that...
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after the signing of peace...
agreements between Israel and...
the Palestine Liberation...
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Muhammad's United Malays...
National Organisation often...
speaks through the youth...
wing on thorny issues to test...
the public mood. Malaysia...
where the official religion is...
Islam, has banned trade...
travel and all other ties with...
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good ties with the world's...
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Rahim was quoted as saying...
by the national news agency...
Bernama. "We only oppose...
the Zionists but not all Jews...
are Zionists who are...
seeking to establish a...
greater Israel," he said.

Passengers take over...
runway as protest
ATHENS (R) — Eight...
passengers, angry over...
waiting in a hot plane...
during a take-off...
delay, took over the...
runway and blocked...
air traffic at Athens...
airport, a Greek civil...
aviation spokesman said...
A group of Olympic...
athletes, including a...
Greek rock star and his...
band, walked out of the...
plane and took over the...
runway, he said. "It was...
crazy. They just took...
over the runway. Someone...
might have been hurt,"...
said a Thessalonian...
civil aviation official at...
the airport. All air...
traffic was blocked for...
10 minutes, until the...
passengers were...
persuaded by police to...
go back to the...
airplane.

France expels...
Turkish cleric
SOCHAUX, France (AFP) —...
France has ordered a...
Turkish cleric from the...
eastern town of Sochaux...
to immediately return to...
Turkey, officials...
announced Friday. The...
order signed by Interior...
Minister Charles Pasqua...
came after Abdul Rahman...
Ciftcioglu, 30, alias...
Unal, "proffered...
threats," calling for...
action to be taken...
against the cleric in the...
eastern town of Sochaux...
region said the imam of...
the Sochaux mosque was...
to be expelled Friday...
The expulsion order...
comes as hardline...
militants issued...
threats Friday...
French interests...
from Algeria, all...
support for the...
military-backed...
regime and ended...
its crackdown on...
Muslims in France...
(see page 12).

Abbot back...
cano
GE, Alaska (R) —...
controlled river...
an active vote...
Tuesday after...
helicopter rescue...
d by a brother...
Alaska National...
Dante II, the...
Alaska National...
Administration...
posted on the...
(3,374 meters)...
tumbled back...
ter that it had...
July 29, in a...
space mission...
"It appears that...
the robot," said...
the Gateway of...
National Guard...
tally, it fell...
so it makes...
difficult to...
other helicopter...
likely to...
by NASA, he...
they still want

Israel fires missiles at Lebanese ridge
NABATIYEH (R) — Israeli forces fired three surface-to-surface missiles into a hill in a guerrilla-held ridge in South Lebanon, security sources said on Friday. A radio station run by an Israeli-backed militia confirmed what it said was the first ever use of the "Gold One" missiles in Lebanon on Thursday. Voice of the South radio, mouthpiece of the South Lebanon Army (SLA), said the three missiles hit Jabal Al Rafi hill in Iqim Al Toufah region, a mountainous ridge used by Hizbollah guerrillas to attack Israeli forces occupying a strip in the south. Residents of neighbouring villages said they heard three huge blasts and debris from the explosions reached villages more than two kilometres away from the hill, wounding a woman in the village of Arab Salim and causing panic in the region. Hizbollah did not comment on the attack.

Aloni backs Hussein in Jerusalem row
OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israel's reaction to Palestinian meetings with diplomats in East Jerusalem is "hysterical," normal life, to use the words of Minister Shimon Peres, said today. Ms. Aloni, a leader of the left-wing Meretz party, defended the coalition, defended the right of Palestinians to hold talks with diplomats in the eastern part of the Holy City, a particular at Orient House. Her comments came after Foreign Minister Shimon Peres criticised a meeting on Thursday between Faisal Husseini, the leading Palestinian in the West Bank, and foreign diplomats to discuss the future of Jerusalem (see page 12). Ms. Aloni said on Israeli radio: "The Israeli reaction to these meetings is verging on the hysterical. We can't create an atmosphere of just between the Israelis and the Palestinians by attacking the activities in Orient House."

Malaysian group urges ties with Israel
KUALA LUMPUR (AP) — The youth wing of Malaysia's governing party Friday proposed opening relations with Israel in a new sign that attitudes towards the Jewish state are thawing in this Muslim nation. Ties with Israel can now be considered after the signing of peace agreements between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Jordan, said Abdul Rahim Tamby Chik, the youth wing's leader. Prime Minister Mahathir Muhammad's United Malays National Organisation often speaks through the youth wing on thorny issues to test the public mood. Malaysia, where the official religion is Islam, has banned trade, travel and all other ties with Israel. However, diplomatic relations could only be established after Israel shows sincerity in seeking peace and good ties with the world's Muslim states, Mr. Abdul Rahim was quoted as saying by the national news agency, Bernama. "We only oppose the Zionists but not all Jews are Zionists who are seeking to establish a greater Israel," he said.

Passengers take over runway as protest
ATHENS (R) — Eight passengers, angry over waiting in a hot plane during a take-off delay, took over the runway and blocked air traffic at Athens airport, a Greek civil aviation spokesman said. A group of Olympic athletes, including a Greek rock star and his band, walked out of the plane and took over the take-off strip demanding an immediate departure, he said. "It was crazy. They just took over the runway. Someone might have been hurt," said a Thessalonian civil aviation official at the airport. All air traffic was blocked for 10 minutes, until the passengers were persuaded by police to go back to the airplane.

France expels Turkish cleric
SOCHAUX, France (AFP) — France has ordered a Turkish cleric from the eastern town of Sochaux to immediately return to Turkey, officials announced Friday. The order signed by Interior Minister Charles Pasqua came after Abdul Rahman Ciftcioglu, 30, alias Unal, "proffered threats," calling for action to be taken against the cleric in the eastern town of Sochaux region said the imam of the Sochaux mosque was to be expelled Friday. The expulsion order comes as hardline militants issued threats Friday. French interests from Algeria, all support for the military-backed regime and ended its crackdown on Muslims in France (see page 12).

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية تصدر بالانجليزية عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية. الراي.

2 Somalis killed in Mogadishu shootout

NAIROBI (AFP) — Two Somali civilian bystanders have been killed and three others wounded during a shootout between U.N. troops and Somali gunmen in Mogadishu, a U.N. military spokesman said here Friday. Major Rick McDonald of the United Nations Operation Somalia (UNOSOM) told AFP on telephone from the Somali capital that the incident was sparked off when several Somalis tried to enter the U.N. compound in Mogadishu and were refused entry for lack of identification Thursday. Maj. McDonald said that the Somalis left, only to return later with armed gunmen who opened fire on UNOSOM security forces manning the gate. "The U.N. peacekeepers returned fire in self-defence, but unfortunately two Somali bystanders were killed and three others wounded," he said. There were no casualties on the U.N. side, he added. In another incident Friday, Mr. McDonald said, U.N. peacekeepers exchanged gunfire with a group of armed Somalis who tried to hijack a UNISOM vehicle in Baidoa, northwest of the Somali capital.

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U.S. says Israel-Syria talks in bargaining phase Damascus said to have proposed Golan withdrawal compromise

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — Israel-Syria peace talks have turned the corner into a bargaining phase that could produce concrete results, U.S. officials say after Secretary of State Warren Christopher's latest Middle East tour. A senior U.S. official stressed recently that a Syria-Israel peace agreement "would improve the character of the Syrian-American relationship." Both Israel and the United States feel that Syria has already given evidence of good faith, with Mr. Peres publicly giving Syria credit for restoring calm in Lebanon after the Hizbollah movement staged attacks on northern Israel. The negotiations are likely to take some time, however, since the two sides are aiming for agreement on a full, detailed peace treaty. Syria has refused to consider the idea of an initial agreement in principle before more detailed discussions, the practice followed successfully in the Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Jordanian talks. Under the reported Syrian proposal, Israel would start its withdrawal this year and complete it before the next Israeli general elections planned for June 1996. Each step would be accompanied by measures to normalise relations between the two countries, ending with an exchange of ambassadors and open borders. Syria would accept an Israeli proposal for a complete demilitarisation of the Heights and would not demand an identical Israeli move in Galilee, in northern Syria.

Washington considers that there has been sufficient progress in recent months for Mr. Christopher to revisit the region often to try to help the process along. He returned from a trip to the region Tuesday and is due to go back in mid-September for his fourth visit in as many months. When Mr. Christopher made the first of his recent visits in June, the two sides simply laid out their priorities, the State Department official said. The following month, Mr. Christopher found each side testing the resistance of the other but that "psychological tug-of-war" too is now over, the official said. "It is clear that neither of the two positions will win the day. You have to work out quietly a third position," Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres told journalists Monday. (Continued on page 3)



PRINCE HASSAN IN MA'AN: His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan chats with community leaders of Ma'an during a visit he paid to the southern town on Friday (see page 3)

Jordan and Israel resume Dead Sea talks on Monday

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter
AMMAN — Jordanian and Israeli negotiators resume talks on the key issues of border and water issues on Monday, having worked out the tools for advancing the negotiations. No precise details were available on the progress reached in the negotiations, held Tuesday and Wednesday at the Moriah Plaza Dead Sea Hotel on the Israeli side at a site that Israel calls Ein Boker. The talks will resume at the same site on Monday. In simultaneous talks held last week at a tent camp straddling the frontier in the Wadi Araba area, Jordan and Israel made progress on demarcating the tools to demarcate their borders, including maps and other documents that date back to 1928. The Wadi Araba tent camp was to be dismantled over the weekend and the negotiators would join the broader negotiating process at the Moriah Plaza Hotel on Monday. However, the border demarcation sub-commission would meet separately from other working groups. Marwan Muasher, spokesman for the Jordanian delegation, said late Wednesday: "We've been engaged in substantial negotiations on sharing water sources, demarcating the border between Jordan and Israel as well as other issues, including opening an air passage between the two countries." Dr. Muasher refused to be more specific. Meanwhile, a former Israeli defence minister, Ariel Sharon, conceded that as a general he had ordered his troops to move the Israeli border fence eastwards into Jordan in the 1970s. Mr. Sharon said on Israeli army radio that when he was head of the southern command he ordered the fence moved for the length of over 100 kilometres in the Wadi Araba area to "prevent infiltrations." Witting or unwitting, Mr. Sharon's comment consolidated Jordan's case. The Kingdom is demanding the return of more than 380 kilometres of its land now under Israeli occupation and says that the Jewish state encroached upon Jordanian land before and after the 1967 war. Mr. Sharon also confirmed that the moving of the fence covered up to 8.5 kilometres and the Israeli army built a new "security road" alongside the new fence. However, the hawkish former minister asserted that "moving the fence doesn't mean moving the border" since, in his view, "no man exactly knows where the border is." At the same time, the very fact that Israel did make a move into Jordanian territory in the 70s established that there was a previous line maintained by Israel and that the Jewish state moved the fence forward meant a violation of international borders and countered Israel's argument that the border was never demarcated. In last week's negotiations, Jordan and Israel agreed to form joint survey teams to translate maps dating back to the British mandate of Palestine under the League of Nations, officials from both sides said. According to Israeli troops, the negotiators at the Dead Sea hotel also made (Continued on page 7)

King receives well wishes on eve of anniversary of accession to Throne

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Friday received congratulatory cables from heads of state, crown princes and prime ministers of Arab and foreign countries congratulating him on the 42nd anniversary of his accession to the Throne. The cables wished King Hussein continued good health and happiness and the Jordanian people further progress and prosperity. The cables were sent by King Fahd Ben Abdul Aziz of Saudi Arabia, King Hassan II of Morocco, Qatari Leader Sheikh Khalifa Ben Hamad Al Thani, Emir of Bahrain Sheikh Isa Ben Salman, Qatari Crown Prince Hamad Ben Khalifa Al Thani and Prime Minister of Bahrain Sheikh Khalifa Ben Salman Al Khalifa. The King also received congratulatory cables from Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres. On Thursday, King Hussein received similar cables from Sultan Qaboos Ben Sa'id of Oman, Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahyan, Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, Pakistani President Farouq Ahmad Khan, and President Fidel Ramos of the Philippines. Cables were also sent by UAE Vice-President Sheikh Maktoum Ben Rashid Al Maktoum, Bahraini Crown Prince Sheikh Hamad Ben Issa Al Khalifa, Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Khalifa Ben Zayed Al Nahyan and UAE Deputy Prime Minister Sheikh Sultan Ben Zayed Al Nahyan.



Palestinian mothers argue with an Israeli officer asking for the release of their sons who were arrested following protests in the West Bank town of Hebron Friday (AFP photo)

PLO to co-administer crossings in nine days

RAFAH (Agencies) — Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) said on Friday they would jointly administer international crossings from Gaza and Jericho, now under Palestinian rule, to Egypt and Jordan. The chief Palestinian negotiator with Israel, Nabil Shaath, and Israeli Police Minister Moshe Shahal toured the Rafah passenger terminal on the Gaza Strip border with Egypt and announced measures to improve travel across the border. "I am very happy that all of you are here so you can see the start of the real change in this crossing," said Dr. Shaath, who is also a member of the Palestinian self-rule authority, at a joint news conference with Mr. Shahal. "On Sunday a week from this Sunday, the Palestinian side will take (charge of) the Palestinian wing of this crossing," he said. Israeli officials, now administering the border crossing alone, briefed the two officials on the new arrangements, including plans to double the Israeli staff who process passports and inspect baggage. Mr. Shahal also referred to upcoming changes at the terminal but did not mention details. "We have a report about new arrangements that will be effective two weeks from now," he said. Palestinians have complained that they have been held up for hours — sometimes overnight — by delays at passport and customs stations. "If we add manpower and equipment, it shouldn't take longer than 90 minutes," Mr. Shahal said. Dr. Shaath is planning minister in the new autonomous Palestinian government for the Gaza and Jericho, and chief peace negotiator with Israel. Dr. Shaath told reporters that "we want this passage to be the beginnings of peace." He said he was pleased with Israel's pledge to increase the number of inspectors at the border and added that "there will be people to solve problems on both sides." Palestinian officials told reporters that Palestinian security men will be posted at the border stations starting Aug. 21. Dual Israeli-Palestinian responsibility for border crossings was called for in the peace accord signed May 4 in Cairo. Israeli Radio reported that Mr. Shahal also told Dr. Shaath that "safe passages" for Palestinians travelling across Israel from Gaza to Jericho will open Monday. Mr. Arafat and his deputies have complained that the lack of Israel-approved travel routes — also called for in the Cairo accord — had made it nearly impossible for Palestinians to move between the autonomous areas. Under the May self-rule accord, signed by PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Israel retains overall control of the border crossings but divides responsibility for passengers between Israel and the PLO. The sides agreed to divide the terminals, where the PLO will run a section designated for Palestinian residents of Gaza and Jericho and visitors to the self-rule areas. (Continued on page 7)

Berlusconi seeks to calm Italy

ROME (AFP) — Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, launching his promised message of "optimism" after weeks of scandal and an attack on the lira, called for calm Friday in interviews on national television. "Be calm — the reality is that it is not raining. Italy has never had it so good," he said on the main news programme of the third public RAI channel. Some 200,000 new jobs had been created, production was growing and inflation was at an all-time low, he said. "Here is an economy which works, that is the reality," he added. Mr. Berlusconi had cut short his planned holiday over a national holiday weekend in a bid to stem the crisis hitting his coalition government, beset by internal divisions and a lira which fell to historically low levels by Friday (see page 8). Speaking on the TGA channel owned by the Fininvest media empire, Mr. Berlusconi said the lira had been victim to volatile summer speculation. "In August it is easy to speculate, because there are not many traders around and their movements have a more striking effect," he said in the interview from his villa in Arcore, near the northern city of Milan. Referring to the internal cabinet divisions between his Forza Italia and the republican Northern League, lead



Silvio Berlusconi by Umberto Bossi. Mr. Berlusconi told TGA that "certain leaders make declarations which are played with by commentators and summer editorialists." Mr. Bossi has made increasingly sharp attacks on Mr. Berlusconi over the perceived conflict of interest between his job as prime minister and his ownership of the Fininvest media-based empire, which came to a head with the recent arrest of his brother Paolo on bribery charges. He called on his coalition partners to show "responsibility" and promised to attack the budget deficit in September through "rationalisation" and cuts in the public sector rather than higher taxes. Parliamentary leaders of the left-wing opposition had asked Mr. Berlusconi Friday to explain himself on Italy's financial crisis, saying solutions had to be found rapidly for two of the basic causes of the lira's collapse. These were "the inability of the government to adopt serious economic and financial policies" and "the conflict of interests which is increasingly developing into a real moral question," Cesare Salvi and Luigi Berlinguer said in a statement.

Last-minute hitch hits U.S.-N. Korea document

GENEVA (Agencies) — North Korea called in the American delegation for fresh negotiations on their nuclear standoff, in a last-minute hitch to the two sides signing a joint statement, U.S. officials said on Friday evening. Washington has approved the draft text hammered out by U.S. and North Korean technical experts on Thursday, but Pyongyang had not given the green light, a U.S. official told Reuters as the two delegations began talks in Geneva. "We had the approval to go ahead. Apparently they did not," a U.S. official told Reuters as the closed-door talks got under way at North Korea's diplomatic mission along Lake Geneva. "Apparently their capital wants to talk about it more. It is a negotiating tactic," he added. "We hoped there would be a signing ceremony." Earlier in the day, a North Korean diplomat said the experts had discussed providing Pyongyang with new light-water reactor technology and "normal relations" with Washington in return for freezing its existing nuclear programme. U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Robert Gallucci headed the small American delegation meeting North Koreans led by Pyongyang's Deputy Foreign Minister Kang Sok-Ju. Mr. Gallucci said in an interview with CNN that the two countries were looking for an agreement on a joint document covering certain points only. "We and the North Ko-

Palestinians seek own oil refinery

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A group of investors is studying the possibility of building a refinery in the occupied territories with capital raised by Palestinians living in the Gulf states, but the idea remains vague and undefined, officials and businessmen said Friday.

They said no feasibility studies or even preliminary studies were conducted on the idea and the group had not formally approached the Jordanian government or the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Company (JPRC).

Said Al Tal, director-general of the JPRC, said the group got in touch with the firm in an informal manner. "Obviously, being a refinery, we know something about refining and they wanted to discuss it with us," Mr. Tal told the Jordan Times.

Reports said that the idea of setting up a refinery in the occupied territories came up after it was found that the JPRC could not accommodate the processing requirements of the Palestine National Authority (PNA) in Gaza and Jericho.

According to a local report, "the PNA is unable to supply the JPRC with a sufficient amount of crude oil," hence the self-rule authority now wants "to build a refinery in the West Bank."

But Mr. Tal dismissed the report as groundless. "There was never any discussion involving the JPRC," he said.

Asked whether the company was in a position to meet the needs of the Palestinians, Mr. Tal said: "If there is a proposal from our government to us to study the possibility, we could study it."

On the setting up of a refinery in the occupied territories, Mr. Tal said it was a subject which needs extensive studies and preparations. "There has to be an ideal site, there has to be a regular source of crude, there has to be water and a lot of other things," he told the Jordan Times.

According to reports, the focus of the group of investors, who were not identified, is Palestinians in the Gulf states for capital. The group also raised the issue with oil companies in the Gulf, apparently with a view to drawing from their expertise in setting up a refinery, they said.

"Beyond that, there is no indication yet that Palestinians in the Gulf states are enthusiastic about the idea," said a businessman. No details were available on the estimated cost of the project.

Others said the idea of a refinery had to be seen in the context of a broader approach to setting up basic industries in the Palestinian territories such as a cement company and iron and steel plants. But in the absence of a final agreement between Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on economic cooperation, the host of ideas is mostly left to the private sector; there are no clear ideas on how the PLO leadership viewed cooperation with Jordan in such strategic industries.

"There are lots of ideas being discussed and various options being considered," said a businessman. "But in the absence of clear positions on the PLO's part, everything is hanging in the air."

In the context of the reported quest for a refinery, the businessman said, "for the next few years, the Palestinians will have to depend on imported fuel and they have to make up

their mind from where to get it."

"It could come from Israel or Jordan or any other source. But given the situation today, fuel from Jordan is cheaper than that from Israel," added the businessman.

However, under the present conditions, Jordan cannot export crude oil or fuel oil, whether gasoline or diesel, simply because the Kingdom itself is getting its supplies to meet its own local demand from Iraq under a tacit approval from the U.N. Sanctions Committee.

According to reports, the refinery being discussed by the group of investors will have a processing capacity of 15,000 barrels of crude oil per day supplied by "Arab and Islamic countries."

Mr. Tal described the quantity as far below the actual needs of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Israel, mindful that the Palestinians might get concessionary prices for their crude oil needs from the oil-producing Gulf states and could have prices lower than those in the Jewish state, insisted on including a clause related to oil in an economic agreement it signed with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) in April.

The clause states that any difference in prices of gasoline in the autonomous territories will not fall short by more than 15 per cent of the maximum gasoline price in Israel.

The idea behind the clause is clear: Israel does not want its own oil refining industry to suffer as a result of Israelis driving into the Palestinian territories for their needs of gasoline at cheaper prices.

"That is," explained an economist, "if, and when the Palestinians produce their own gasoline at cheaper prices."

There are 12 northern and six southern provinces.

Tensions over administrative reform and decentralisation were among the causes of friction between Mr. Saleh and former Vice-President and YSP leader Ali Saleh Al Beidh which led to the two-month civil war, the sources said.

A committee was set up to revise provincial boundaries after the 1990 merger but failed to accomplish its task.

"The old committee was unable to introduce reforms because of political differences between Saleh and Beidh. This is no longer the case now," one source said.

Mr. Beidh declared a breakaway state in the south shortly after war started on May 4, but it collapsed when forces loyal to Mr. Saleh captured its capital, Aden on July 7. Mr. Beidh fled to Oman.

Before the war, each of the two former parts of united Yemen was virtually under the control of its pre-merger ruler.

Mr. Saleh was now implementing parts of an abortive national reconciliation accord he signed with Mr. Beidh three months before the war, but without referring to it, one source said.

The accord, signed in Jordan, provided for the redrawing of united Yemen into no more than seven provinces and the introduction of local governments.

The source said that among the president's priorities was making all local officials electable from the governor down.

Yemen likely to redraw provincial boundaries

SANAA (R) — Yemen's provincial boundaries are likely to change under reforms aimed at integrating north and south which should strengthen the grip of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, political and official sources say.

Mr. Saleh, whose troops won a two-month civil war against southern Yemeni forces on July 7, appointed Abdul Karim Al Arshi to head a committee to revise administrative division in a decree published by official newspaper Al Thawra on Wednesday.

Mr. Arshi is a former member of the presidential council and a former minister of local administration.

An official source said the decree "marks the real state towards a truly united country and the first step towards local governments elected at all levels."

But one political source said: "The redrawing, involving a change of administrative boundaries, is likely to strengthen Saleh's grip over the country."

In Yemen's tribal north, redrawing could be used to weaken certain tribes whose loyalties were in doubt, and in the south it could be used to weaken the traditional power bases of the former ruling group, the Yemen Socialist Party (YSP), he added.

The two parts of Yemen merged in 1990, but provincial boundaries have remained unchanged since before the 1960s, when the north was ruled by Imams (Shiite Muslim leaders) and the south occupied by the British.

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UNREST IN HEBRON: Israeli soldiers guard a handcuffed Palestinian youth arrested following protests in Hebron on Friday. The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) on Friday asked the Security Council to reauthorise a U.N. observer mission for Hebron, saying its mission had not been completed (AFP photo)

Friday asked the Security Council to reauthorise a U.N. observer mission for Hebron, saying its mission had not been completed (AFP photo)

Turkmen leader to visit Iran

TASHKENT (R) — The leader of the former Soviet republic of Turkmenistan, Saparmurat Niyazov, will visit neighbouring Iran next week to sign several cooperation agreements, an official Turkmen newspaper said on Friday.

Turkmenbashi Iskra said new accords would be signed in Tehran but it did not specify if these would include a long-awaited deal to build a gas pipeline through Iran.

The paper also reported praise spoken on Thursday by visiting Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati for Mr. Niyazov — the latest sign of an increasingly close relationship.

"We highly appreciate the wisdom and politics which Saparmurat Turkmenbashi has towards his southern neighbour and we believe that our ties will be strengthened and developed," the newspaper quoted Mr. Velayati as saying.

"Turkmenbashi," which means chief of the Turkmen, is the name Mr. Niyazov prefers to his real surname. He is due to visit Tehran next Tuesday.

"In Tehran, they (Niyazov and Iranian President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani) are planning to sign some agreements," said the newspaper, seen in the Uzbek capital, Tashkent.

"They (Niyazov and Velayati) created a working group to prepare the documents to be signed."

A senior Turkmen official contacted by telephone from Tashkent said it was probable that a final agreement on building a gas pipeline through Iran would be signed.

The pipeline, estimated to cost in excess of \$2 billion and have an annual capacity of 15 billion cubic metres of gas, would be the first from the Commonwealth of Independent States to cross Iran.

Iranian Oil Minister Housheini Azadeh said in Tehran on July 9 he expected final agreement on the project within a month.

If the pipeline is agreed and built, it would profoundly change Turkmenistan's geopolitical position.

NEWS IN BRIEF

PLO asks for extension of Hebron mission

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) asked the Security Council to reauthorise a U.N. observer mission for the West Bank town of Hebron, saying its mission had not been completed. Earlier this week, the 116 observers led Hebron, site of the massacre of more than 30 worshippers at the Ibrahim Mosque, after Israel refused to allow an extension of the mission, according to a PLO letter obtained Thursday. The mission of Danish, Norwegian and Italian peacekeepers was sent under an agreement between Israel and the PLO March 31 amid growing international pressure on the Israeli government. The letter said the situation of Hebron remains tense and that the mosque remains closed, saying that Israel violated the spirit of the March 31 agreement and a U.N. resolution on the matter passed March 18.

7 soldiers killed in clash with Kurds

ANKARA (AFP) — The Turkish army launched a manhunt early Friday in eastern Turkey after suspected Kurdish rebels killed seven soldiers and wounded an eighth, the semi-official Anatolia news agency said. Troops were combing the border region near Armenia and Iran after "separatist terrorists" the term used by Ankara to designate guerrillas of the Kurdistan Labour Party (PKK), after Thursday's attack. The guerrillas ambushed the troops with machine-guns in the Aralik region of Iğdır province shortly before midnight Thursday, Anatolia quoted the army as saying.

Chief rabbi of Morocco dies at 88

RABAT (AP) — Yehidia Monsenego, the chief rabbi of Morocco, has died, the official Maghreb Arab Press (MAP) news agency reported Friday. He was 88. Monsenego, who died Thursday at home in the Jewish cemetery, was to be buried Friday in the Jewish cemetery there, the agency reported. He came from a long line of rabbis who settled in Morocco after Spain expelled its Jews in 1492.

Eritrea, Sudan discuss bilateral ties

NAIROBI (AFP) — Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki has held talks with Sudanese Foreign Minister Hussein Abu Saleh on relations between the two countries, Eritrean radio reported. Mr. Afewerki and Mr. Saleh met in the Eritrean town of Asmara on Thursday to discuss ongoing efforts to patch up relations between the two countries, said the broadcast. Mr. Saleh delivered a message from Sudanese President Omar Hassan Al Bashir. Eritrea has complained that guerrillas are infiltrating its southern borders from neighbouring Sudan, following incursions earlier this year.

Former British minister to meet Qadhafi

EDINBURGH (R) — A former British law minister said on Friday he had accepted an invitation from Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Qadhafi to visit Tripoli and presumed they would talk about the Lockerbie bombing. Britain and the United States hold Libya responsible for the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie in December 1988. They issued arrest warrants in November 1991 for two Libyans, Abdul Baset Ali Mohamud Al Megrahi and Al Amin Khalifa Dhimah, on charges of having planted the radio cassette bomb. Nicholas Fairbairn, a former solicitor-general for Scotland, said no agenda had been suggested for his talks with the Libyan leader but he presumed the meeting was in connection with Lockerbie. "A message came to my office saying he would like me to go there to see him," he said. "I'm quite happy to do that."

Thai police change tack in Saudi case

BANGKOK (R) — Thai investigators believe the wife and son of a key witness in a case involving stolen Saudi gems, case may have been killed in an accident after all and not murdered as first thought, "local media" reported on Friday.

The Nation newspaper quoted investigators as saying a thorough investigation of the car in which Darawadi, 35, and Seri, 14, were found dead on Aug. 1 showed they could have been killed by the impact after swerving off the road.

"I believe it was an accident," commander of the scientific crime detection division Sakdett Kannasat was quoted as saying.

Police were not available for comment on the report. Police originally said the two: the wife and son of gem trader Santi Sriphanakha, were murdered and the car was crashed to make it look like an accident.

Mr. Santi was arrested on charges of having bought some of the \$20 million worth of jewellery stolen by a Thai worker from a palace in Riyadh in 1990.

Thai police caught the thief, returned the gems and closed the case. But Riyadh demanded it be reopened after discovering 75 per cent of the returned jewellery was fake.

Mr. Santi turned state witness, leading to the arrest of at least seven people including three policemen on charges of embezzling. Dozens of senior police officials, now face further charges.

The local media has reported that police sources suspect the senior officials could have been involved in the mysterious deaths.

Interior Minister Chavalit Yongchaiyudh has said it was impossible the two were killed in an accident.

Meanwhile, Thai police have told the Interior Ministry they think two Saudi officials sent to Thailand to retrieve the jewellery may also have been involved in the scam, according to ministry officials.

The ministry is reviewing a police request for their extradition.

U.S. says ex-king among Afghan options

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Bill Clinton's administration said Thursday that ending bloodshed and "ongoing anarchy" in Afghanistan depends on finding a government acceptable to all Afghans, and it could include the long-exiled king.

Robin Raphael, assistant secretary of state for South Asia, made the statements to members of Congress, some have been concerned by warlordism, killing and narcotics trafficking in the South Asian country since the fall of the last Soviet-installed government in 1992.

Problems have worsened with intensified factional warfare since January, she said, when "things began to fall apart" around Kabul, the capital. This year has added new waves of refugees and 23,000 dead or wounded. Ms. Raphael told the sub-committee on Asia of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the House of Representatives.

"Unable to affect events directly, we support coordinated efforts by the U.N. and other international organisations, to find

a government "acceptable to all Afghans," she said. "This political process could include the former king, Zahir Shah, should he so desire," said Ms. Raphael. He occasionally meets with U.S. officials at his exile retreat near Rome.

"It would appear entirely appropriate to ask whether the United States, given its heavy involvement in Afghanistan during the 1980s, doesn't bear a special moral responsibility," said the sub-committee chairman, Gary Ackerman.

The United States and world community ultimately will have to pay a high price for inattention to Afghanistan, Representative Dana Rohrabacher warned.

But "we can't plant a government in Afghanistan," said Ms. Raphael.

"Not unless we use the power we have," Mr. Rohrabacher retorted.

Mr. Rohrabacher, a Republican conservative, said he heard that those who bombed the New York World Trade Centre in 1992 may have links with



Ex-king Zahir Shah

drug traffickers believed moving among Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Ms. Raphael said she could not discuss such matters at a public session.

Mr. Rohrabacher said King Zahir, whom he has met, could be "a vehicle for decent (Afghan) people who want to throw out the drug lords and terrorists to rally around. What other alternative is there?"

Rival guerrilla factions destroying Kabul, led by Prime Minister Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and President Burhanuddin Rabbani, are intransigent, Ms. Raphael said. It is not really a government, she went on, because there is no control and cabinet ministers do not meet.

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO
17:00 Coup De Bleu Dans L'Etoiles
17:11 Fantomette
17:30 Le Monde Sous Marin
18:30 News in French
18:45 Ushuaia
19:00 News in Hebrew
19:30 Dimension
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Movies, Games, and Videos
21:00 One to One
21:30 The Campbell
22:00 News in English

PRAYER TIMES

04:27 Sunrise
05:33 Sunrise
12:41 Dhuhr
16:25 Asr
19:20 Maghreb
21:00 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweilich, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrence Church Tel. 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623941

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be hot with winds northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 21 / 35
Aqaba 27 / 41
Deraia 18 / 38
Jordan Valley 25 / 40

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Aqaba 34, Aqaba 40 Humidity readings: Amman 30 per cent, Aqaba 21 per cent.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Hisham Kan'an 790286

Dr. Walid Al Masri 675485

Dr. Rami Mazwi 794788

Dr. Khalil Jheili 740740

First pharmacy 661912

Firdous pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Nairolah pharmacy 636372

Al Salim pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shamsi pharmacy 637660

Najib pharmacy 847632

TRIP:

Dr. Ahmad Gazi ()

Akqada pharmacy ()

ZARQA:

Dr. Fouad Haradallah 903642

Dr. Wafiq Al-Sayid 903642

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate 630341

Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 921111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 634022

Traffic Police 696390

Public Security Department 603800

Hotel Complaints 603800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage 897467

Complaints 787111

Telephone Information 121

(directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone 623101

Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661011

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680101

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636281

RJ Flight Information 06-332081

Al-Jalal Hotel 636281

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn. 64281/6

Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 64281/6

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malinas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shamsi 664171/4

Shamsi Hospital 669311

University Hospital 645845

Al-Musabir Hospital 667227/7

The Islamic, Adabi 777012

Al-Ahli, Adabi 664164/6

Italian, Al-Mulajjem 777013/3

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26

Army, Marla 891611/5

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:

Zarga Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarga National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)909090

IRBID:

Princess Beama Hospital (02)273555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272725

Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital (02)247100

AQABA:

King Hussein Hospital 07034111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport. Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:45 Jakarta, Singapore (RJ)

08:00 Abu Dhabi (RJ)

09:45 New Delhi (RJ)

18:15 Athens (RJ)

18:15 Dhaka (RJ)

18:30 Karachi, Dubai (RJ)

11:00 Beirut (RJ)

11:00 Colombo (RJ)

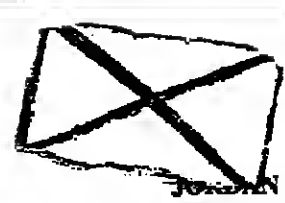
16:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

17:35 London (RJ)

12:50 Cairo (RJ)

12:25 Istanbul (RJ)

19:25 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)



The Hashemite Book chronicles development of Armed Forces

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Thursday presented His Majesty King Hussein with a copy of The Hashemite Book, which documents the achievements of the Hashemite family over the past decades.

Presented to the King on the 42nd anniversary of his accession to the throne, the book contains chapters dedicated to the development of the Armed Forces.

King Hussein, in a message to the Crown Prince, paid tribute to his efforts and cultural and political activities.

"I take deep pride in all the activities you undertake on behalf of the Hashemite family, all the fruitful projects and meetings held with our dear Jordanian community, the historic responsibility you shoulder towards the fulfilment of national achievements and your defence of rights, freedom and peace through your lectures, research and writings," said the King.

"I have reviewed with delight the different chapters in The Hashemite Book which relate the Hashemite family's achievements over the years, and noted particularly those chapters in which you discuss religious legitimacy and the Hashemites, as well as the Hashemites and Jerusalem and the concept of the religious and divine sovereignty over the holy places, the establishment of an international Zakat organisation, protection of the rights of the monotheistic religions, the Christian-Islamic interfaith dialogue, the comprehensive history of Jordan and most importantly, the Armed Forces and their defence of the homeland since the foundation of the Kingdom," said King Hussein in his message.

The Hashemite Book contains ideas, concepts and facts worthy of reaching all citizens in the Kingdom as they provide a rich substance

for researchers and scholars who can build on them, added King Hussein.

Concepts contained in The Hashemite Book should be implanted in the minds and hearts of the coming generations as they provide the pure facts about the country and its leadership over the years, said the King.

Entrusting the Crown Prince with the task of supervising the implementation of ideas contained in The Hashemite Book, King Hussein said that these chapters should be translated into practice with the help of experts, scholars, committees and institutions, paying particular attention to reorganising the domestic front so that the country's young can follow in the footsteps of their ancestors.

The King said he fully supported the work of the Crown Prince in further upholding rights and justice and in serving the higher national interests.

Palace denies Prince visited Israel

AMMAN (AP) — The Royal Palace on Friday denied that King Hussein's nephew visited Israel to discuss using the Jewish state's Mediterranean ports for Jordanian imports and exports.

A palace spokesperson, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the report published in Israel Thursday was "baseless and fabricated."

"Neither Prince Talal nor any other member of the royal family visited Israel," the spokesperson told the Associated Press.

Israeli Radio reported Thursday that Prince Talal, King Hussein's military secretary, with Zvi Zilker, mayor of the port of Ashdod, and other Israeli officials.

Some Israeli newspapers published photos of what they said was Prince Talal, who reportedly told the mayor that Jordan was keen on securing a separate 100-acre section of the Israeli port for Jordanian trade.

But officials close to the palace said the photos showed Talal

Halawani, a Jordanian trader who was on a business trip to Israel.

One official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Mr. Halawani "was tricked into meeting with the Israeli mayor, who thought that the man was Prince Talal."

"An Israeli company had a dispute with the mayor and it apparently wanted to embarrass him," the official said without elaboration.

Mr. Halawani was not immediately available for comment.

Ma'an citizens greet Crown Prince with tumultuous welcome, celebrations

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Friday was given a tumultuous welcome by citizens of Ma'an where he performed Friday prayers and attended a celebration of the 42nd anniversary of His Majesty King Hussein's accession to the throne.

Prince Hassan joined hundreds of worshippers at Ma'an Grand Mosque for prayers and listened to the Friday sermon in which the preacher underscored the importance of safeguarding national unity and warned those attempting to tamper with it.

The preacher talked about the relationship tying the Hashemite family to the holy city of Jerusalem and the sacrifices they offered in protecting it.

After prayers, Ma'an citizens gathered around Prince Hassan chanting slogans welcoming him.

place where the Ahsabid revolution set out from Humeima, where the late King Abdullah Ben Al Hussein settled, and where all the free Arabs of Bilad Al Sham (Greater Syria) had flocked to express support for him.

"We, on this holy land, are honoured to shoulder the responsibility although this responsibility and trust is great," said the Crown Prince.

He said King Hussein's key role in unifying ranks in Jordan gives him the impetus to persevere in these difficult times "which are full of challenges."

He said the current stage was not a move from war to peace inasmuch as it is a transition from the no-war, no-peace situation towards "war against everything that is abnormal in our lives," as His Majesty has said.

Clear strategy for regional interaction is necessary, says Crown Prince

AMMAN (Petra) — It is necessary to ensure the interaction of the southern region with the other regions of the Kingdom within a clear strategy, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said.

Addressing a ceremony Thursday at the headquarters of the Southern Military Command Headquarters to honour personnel and organisations that contributed to the opening of the border crossing between Jordan and Israel in the south last Monday, the Prince added that more action rather than words and speeches were needed to deepen the concept of "field work."



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Thursday addressing a ceremony to honour those who participated in technical preparations to open the Jordan-Israel border between Aqaba and Eilat.

The political will exists to introduce changes for the better, and in the south, work should begin by activating the Aqaba harbour, improving the environment and protecting the sea and beaches from pollution, said Prince Hassan.

Referring to plans to establish a free zone in Aqaba and industrial zones near the harbour and the airport, the Crown Prince said such plans should be conducted in stages, with careful consideration to civil works and infrastructure including water and electricity.

He said that only when well-prepared plans are finalised can Jordan request additional assistance and loans from international sources, to finance these schemes.

Referring to the peace process, the Crown Prince said that there can be no peace in the absence of balanced and integrated opportunities for the local population and social justice. This balance, he said, will be achieved through the country's intrinsic capabilities.

Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Razzak Ensour also addressed the ceremony and paid tribute to the engineers and workers who have carried out the Aqaba-Eilat border crossing project.

Prince Hassan later distributed mementoes to personnel and institutions which took part in the border opening.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

Premier opens Rawdah tunnel

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali opened Al Rawdah Traffic Tunnel on the University of Jordan Road, as part of Jordan's celebrations of the 42nd anniversary of His Majesty King Hussein's accession to the throne. Dr. Majali lauded the efforts of the Greater Amman Municipality to implement this project in record time. It took the municipality two months to complete the construction of the 400-metre-long tunnel, which cost JD 600,000. Attending the tunnel opening ceremony Thursday were senior government officials. Also marking the national celebrations, Minister of Post and Communications Hashem Dabbas laid the foundation stone of the 4th earth satellite station in Bagaa and the telecommunications compound building in Tla' Al Ali in the western outskirts of Amman. The 4th satellite station will replace the one linked with the satellites over the Indian Ocean. The new station will use advanced digital technology, thus reducing the amounts of money paid in the form of annual subscriptions for using advanced digital systems.

Ministry denies cutting subsidies

AMMAN (Petra) — The Supply Ministry Friday dismissed as baseless the news carried by some local newspapers that the ministry plans to eliminate the food subsidies on basic food items by the end of August. The ministry subsidies such items as bread, rice, sugar and powder milk. A ministry spokesperson said that while the ministry regrets the circulation of such groundless news, it would like to reiterate that the ministry's budget for the current year included certain allocations for food subsidies. The sources added that rumours about reducing the number of beneficiaries to a minimum are untrue, adding that the ministry seeks to channel support to the eligible beneficiaries. He said the ministry will distribute food coupons for 1995 in October. The source explained the procedure followed in purchasing basic food items, saying that such items are bought in accordance with specifications stated in the tender invitations. When referring tenders to lowest bidders, the ministry takes into consideration quality and price, the source said.

Phone lines clog to occupied territories

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Phone lines between Jordan and the occupied territories — through an Israeli switchboard — remained clogged with thousands of calls on Friday, four days after the Kingdom and Israel opened direct phone lines between them.

Callers trying to reach relatives in the West Bank and Israel itself reported several hours persistent trying before getting through.

"It took me more than 48 hours before I could reach my mother in Tel Aviv," said a European diplomat.

"Obviously, it has been like

the opening of floodgates; it will take some time before the traffic slows down."

Telecommunication Corporation (TCC) officials would only say that the number of lines available between Jordan and Israel were limited.

No statistics were available on the number of calls made from Jordan to the occupied territories or Israel since the lines went operational on Aug. 7 as part of confidence-building measures stipulated in the Wadilat Declaration signed by His Majesty King Hussein and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on July 25.

Israel's Berek telecommunications company reported that 25,000 calls were made to Jordan from Israel between Sunday and Wednesday.

Prior to the opening of the

lines, calls between Jordan and the occupied territories were made through costly third party connections to Cyprus, Europe and the United States.

The Jerusalem Post reported on Thursday that Berek Director General Yitzhak Kaul had sent a fax message to TCC Director General Ahmad Nawawi proposing a meeting in Jordan or Israel to discuss communications links and additional services. No comment was available in Amman on how Mr. Nawawi responded to the suggestion.

The TCC has set a call rate of JD 12 per minute to Israel and the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. The lower rate available to all other destinations between 10 p.m. to 8 a.m. is not applicable to calls made to Israel.

Israeli Finance Minister

Avraham Shohat and Communications Minister Shulamit Aloni on Wednesday signed regulations setting rates for direct and operator-assisted calls to Jordan from Israel. A peak-hour (8 a.m. to 10 p.m.) calls will cost three shekels (around 850 fils) per minute and 2.4 shekels (600 fils) at other times. The rates have to be approved by the Israeli Knesset.

The rates could be reduced as and when Jordanian and Israeli telecommunications networks are linked as part of a regional fibre-optic cable network that would include Egypt, Syria and Lebanon.

The European Union is partly financing the project, which would take several years to be completed.

The Jerusalem Post also reported Thursday that it had

called Jordan Television (JTV) with a request for a schedule of the programmes of the English Channel on a regular basis so that it could carry them. Al present the Jerusalem Post carried JTV English programme schedules but with a notation — "unofficial."

"The new spirit of cooperation between Jordan and Israel has not passed by the Jerusalem Post," said the right-wing newspaper.

Abbas Amrout, head of JTV's scheduling department, confirmed that he had received the call and that he was studying "what I can do" to meet the Post request.

He said he had asked the Post to call again on Sunday to make arrangements for the regular mailing or faxing of JTV programmes to the newspaper.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FUHEIS FIFTH FESTIVAL

- * Concert by vocalists Ra'id Rabadi, and Omar Abdullah at the main theatre at 21:00.
- * Seminar entitled "The Abounding Natural Resources in Jordan" with the participation of Mr. Kamal Jreisat and Dr. Zaidoun Al Muhsein at the festival site at 18:30.
- * Poetry recital by Jordanian poet Salehman Wada and Lebanese poet Issam Abdullah of Lebanon at the festival site at 19:30.
- * Exhibition of Jordanian scripts, documents, and books.
- * Abstract art paintings exhibition by Salwa Amman, Darya Zetifa, Norma Hattar, and Miss Tu'meh.

and Miss Tu'meh.

- * Exhibition on the city of Salt.
- * Caricature drawings exhibition by Imad Hajjaj, Kifah Mahmoud, and Khaldoun Ghareeb.
- * Exhibition of handicrafts.
- * Comprehensive agricultural exhibition (held for the first time with the participation of the private and public sectors).
- * Exhibition of oil paintings by Princess Wijdan Ali at the Balqa' Art Gallery in Fuheis (10:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.) (Tel. 720677).

Abequa children under King's care pending decision

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Two children in the midst of a custody dispute between the families of their mother and father have been placed under the care of His Majesty King Hussein pending an outcome of the settlement of the dispute.

Family members and their lawyers said Lisa, 6, and Sami, 3, children of Mohamad Abequa and Nihal Abequa, were handed over to Royal Court Chief Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker on Thursday.

The children would continue to be with their grandmother from their father's side under the care of the King, but away from

the Abequa family residence until a dispute Sharia court rules on their custody or an out-of-court settlement is reached, they said.

The grandmother, Sameh, accompanied the children to the Royal Court, where they were handed over to Sharif Zeid, Saleh Mugharbi, a lawyer representing the Abequas, said.

In the meantime, the Abequa family has received assurances that the children would not be handed over to the family of their mother, family members and their lawyer said.

Mohamad Abequa, 46, a naturalised U.S. citizen of Jordanian origin, remains in a Jordanian prison facing charges of first-degree murder and kidnapping.

Ms. Abequa has confessed to interrogators and journalists of killing his wife, Nihal, 40, in her

New Jersey apartment on July 4 in a dispute over raising Lisa and Sami and fleeing to Jordan with the two children. He was arrested on July 20.

The U.S. Ambassador to Jordan, Wesley Egan, has said that he would continue to press the Jordanian government for Mr. Abequa's extradition/expulsion/deportation despite the absence of an extradition treaty between Amman and Washington.

But, by virtue of his Jordanian nationality, which he did not give up while assuming American citizenship, Mr. Abequa will be tried in a Jordanian court, officials say.

Mr. Egan has also said that if a trial in Jordan became the inevitable course, then U.S. law enforcement agencies would make available all evidence to the court to prove the charges.

Reports from New Jersey sug-

gested that state prosecutors might travel to Amman to attend the trial and assist Jordanian prosecutors in the murder and kidnapping case, which is handled separately from the child custody case.

Laying claim to the custody of the children on the basis of a ruling made by a New Jersey court are Nihal Abequa's mother Meriem Gussal and sister Nesime Dokur.

Ms. Dokur arrived here Aug. 1 accompanied by her lawyers as a guest of the King following an appeal from New Jersey law enforcement agencies.

She has appointed two local lawyers on behalf of her mother, but the case has not reached court yet.

Under Islamic Sharia law, which governs most cases related to marriage, divorce, inheritance and child custody in Jordan,

Ms. Gussal has priority to gain custody of her daughter's children. The Abequas have affirmed that they would respect the Sharia court's decision.

The Abequa family is Circassian. The family of Nihal Abequa is half-Circassian, half Turkish.

Ambassador Egan and lawyers have said that an out-of-court settlement was possible. No development in this regard has been reported.

Mr. Mugharbi, the Abequa's lawyer, was quoted as saying that the authorities have assured the family that the children would not be handed over to their mother's family without a court verdict.

"We are sure that His Majesty will treat their children as his own and decide accordingly," Mr. Mugharbi was quoted as saying by the Associated Press.

U.S.: Israel-Syria talks in bargaining phase

(Continued from page 1)

Israel. Damascus would also agree to the presence of a U.S. peacekeeping force or international observers.

According to the Israeli media, Syria has also demanded a total Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon insisting on U.S. and Israeli recognition of the role Syria plays in the country.

Syria is the main foreign power broker in Lebanon, where it maintains 30,000 troops.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa has described the latest talks with Mr. Christopher as "serious and constructive" but said there had been "no real progress."

U.S. officials in Washington believe the regular peace shuttle is reaping dividends and although neither Israel or Syria is happy with the proposals put forward by the other, they have entered a period of bargaining.

For Washington the progress achieved so far would

justify a monthly visit by Mr. Christopher to the region.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin said on Friday he respected the American position in peace moves with Syria that it was not Washington's role to put forward compromise proposals.

Mr. Rabin, facing attacks from the right-wing opposition over Israel's stand on the Golan Heights, said in remarks broadcast on Israel's army radio:

"I very much respect the American position that understands that their role is not to bring bridging or compromise proposals."

He added: "I see no reason for America to change the manner of handling (the situation). It has worked well until today ... and it has to continue that way in the future."

Reports that Mr. Christopher had taken a compromise proposal to Damascus to move the Israel-Syria talks have created a furore in the Jewish state.

One no-show, one flawless show

By Angham Tamimi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Wednesday night's Fuheis audience was upset and furious when Iraqi singer Haitham Youssef failed to appear as billed on the programme. Most of them bought tickets just to see him.

Instead Sina', another contemporary Iraqi singer, whose name was not posted by the Fuheis administrative body although she was invited to sing, was there alongside with Syrian singer Jihad Al Ameer, whose name did appear on the billing.

A member of the Fuheis Festival administration said that Haitham Youssef phoned from Iraq a few hours before the show saying that the Baghdad government prevented him from leaving the country. Other administrators said that he had another programme in the U.S. at the same time.

Regardless of the explanations some of the audience asked for refunds.

Sina' is no less a singer, and maybe even better than Haitham Youssef regarding voice purity and quality. She was once described as "the future Um Kulthoum of Iraq." But, she is a very shy young woman.

Wednesday night, Sina' was criticised for the way she stood on stage. She kept rocking from side to side as if she had stage fright.

But in fact, she was as confident as any other professional artist; the problem is actually much more serious.

Although only 21-years-old, Sina' suffers from heart disease. Doctors have forbidden her to stand for more than an hour, practice any athletics, and wear high-heeled shoes.

So, on Wednesday she was barely standing, she said. She was actually suffering to entertain her audience.

At 12, she won first place in a singing competition

held on Iraq T.V., but because of her condition, she was forced to quit singing. She later appeared in 1990, when she once again won the first place in another competition.

Hearing Sina's voice, the renowned Iraqi composer Taleb Qaraghulhi was astonished. "He wrote some notes for me to sing, and I did," Sina' told the Jordan Times.

Kadhun Al Saher, a famous Iraqi singer and composer in the Arab World, liked her type of voice and invited her to sing some of his compositions. "It was a quite successful cooperation for me," said Sina'.

Her style was welcomed in her country. She sang folkloric pieces accompanied by modern instruments and a quick rhythm. Her music and her performance had a new and different taste.

Adel Hashimi, an Iraqi music critic known to dissect and thoroughly critique a

performance, wrote of Sina', "she sings with all her senses, as if living the song's story at the time of performing."

"She has the highest range of Iraqi women vocalists. She does not need to rehearse, because her voice is created practiced. In fact, it is flawless," said Mr. Hashimi.

"I have been offered several compositions by Yemeni, Syrian and other Arab composers recently. I am working hard to drive my name to the front pages," said Sina'.

In 1994, she won 10th place in a Monte Carlo competition, then first place again in another competition in which many renowned Egyptian, Lebanese, Syrian and Iraqi vocalists participated.

For the time being, she said, "I am planning to join the Academy of Fine Arts in Baghdad for the next semester to study piano and oud."



U.N. force: Lifting Bosnian arms embargo spells disaster

SARAJEVO (R) — The United Nations in Sarajevo said Friday it would be difficult for U.N. peacekeepers to remain in Bosnia if the arms embargo on the Muslim-led government were lifted.

The U.N. was reacting to news from Washington that the embargo might be scrapped if Bosnian Serbs failed to accept a major powers' peace plan.

"If the U.S. goes ahead, it is difficult to see circumstances in which the U.N. peacekeepers could remain in Bosnia," spokesman Michael Williams told Reuters in Zagreb.

U.S. President Bill Clinton promised to ask the United Nations to lift the Bosnian

arms embargo by the end of October unless the Serbs accept the peace plan they rejected last week.

The Senate took a hot-and-cold position by approving two bills: One urging Mr. Clinton to ask the United Nations to lift the embargo and the other to simply order the president to unilaterally lift it by Nov. 15 to arm the Muslims.

The embargo hinders the lightly armed but numerous Bosnian army forces more than the well-armed Serbs and its removal has long been supported by many U.S. politicians.

The Bosnian Serbs have repeatedly rejected international and Serbian govern-

ment pressure to accept a last-ditch peace plan drawn up by the United States, European Union and Russia to divide Bosnia into two almost equal parts.

The U.N. peacekeepers in Sarajevo said lifting the arms embargo spelled disaster for Muslims ringed by rebel Serbs unless the world reverses its refusal to intervene militarily on the ground.

They warn that U.N. aid deliveries to two million people would cease, peacekeeping troops would leave and Serbs could overrun U.N.-mandated Muslim "safe havens" before Bosnia's government army could obtain weapons needed to defend them.

Extracting 18,000 U.N. Protection Force soldiers from exposed enclaves could be messy as Serbs might try to seize some as human shields to deter NATO action and terrified Muslim inhabitants could block the evacuation of others.

In one more bid to persuade the recalcitrant Serbs to opt for peace, U.N. mediator Thorvald Stoltenberg will visit Belgrade, which has backed the major powers' peace deal, and Bosnian Serb stronghold of Pale this weekend, the U.N. said.

U.N. efforts to feed the city suffered another blow when gunfire hit cargo aircraft, forcing the suspension of the relief airlift that had restarted only two days previously.

Residents scattered as Bosnian Serb snipers targeted the city centre and a hospital said an 11-year-old girl was apparently killed by a 12.7 mm machinegun round which ricocheted off a building.

"This is a large calibre weapon in violation of the NATO ultimatum. We think the shot came from the Bosnian Serb side," UNPROFOR spokesman in Sarajevo Major Rob Annink told Reuters.

In another serious breach of the weapons exclusion zone, a mortar round was reported to have struck near the hospital but caused no casualties.

The worsening military situation came as the Bosnian



French UNPROFOR marksmen search for after an 11-year-old girl was slain by a sniper Serb positions on a hill overlooking Sarajevo using an anti-aircraft cannon. (AFP photo)



An 11-year-old Bosnian girl lies dead on a stretcher in the morgue at Sarajevo's Kosevo hospital after she was slain by a sniper using an anti-aircraft cannon. (AFP photo)

government agreed to a U.N. proposal to demilitarise a 20 kilometre zone in and around Sarajevo, replacing soldiers with policemen armed only with pistols.

The measure, which military analysts doubt will succeed, has not yet been agreed by the Bosnian Serbs, who still lay siege to the capital.

U.N. Commander Lientenant-General Sir Michael Rose and UNPROFOR chief of civil affairs Victor Andrejev are due to meet Serb leaders Friday.

"It's a high-level meeting in Pale on a number of issues — reopening Sarajevo's access routes, releasing detainees and a possible demilitarisation of Sarajevo," UNPROFOR spokeswoman Claire Grimes told Reuters.

Bosnian Serb forces reacted to Western pressure to agree to peace by shutting

land supply routes to Sarajevo two weeks ago.

Outside the city, the Bosnian Serb and Muslim-led Bosnian armies were reported pouring troops into a battle zone where the U.N. has threatened air strikes to end the fighting.

A U.N. spokesman said about 2,000 to 3,000 Bosnian government soldiers had been sent bound for the confrontation area to the west of Sarajevo.

"We also see the BSA (Bosnian Serb Army) increasing their troop numbers in the area, between Sarajevo and Visoko, whether it's for an attack or defence it's impossible to answer."

Bosnian Serb forces have again stolen heavy weapons from a U.N. collection point, U.N. officials said Friday.

U.N. Protection Force (UNPROFOR) spokesman

Major Dacre Holloway said the Serbs took a 105 mm gun and ammunition from a collection point at Krivovljani, northwest of Sarajevo, and switched it with a 76mm gun.

Troops from UNPROFOR's Ukrainian contingent discovered the trick and recovered the larger gun after several hours of negotiations, he said.

But the Serbs then took back the 76mm weapon and refused to give it up, even though it contravened the U.N.-declared 20-kilometre (12-mile) heavy weapons exclusion zone around Sarajevo.

Last Friday NATO jets destroyed a Serb anti-tank gun after the Serbs stole five heavy weapons from another U.N. collection point. They subsequently returned the arms.

Japan company not lionising new Disney film

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's Tezuka Production Co. Ltd. said it plans to ask Walt Disney Co. to admit that its box office hit The Lion King was influenced by the work of late Japanese cartoonist Osamu Tezuka. "I wouldn't call it plagiarism, but I want them to at least admit that they had Tezuka's work in mind when making the film," said Takayuki Matsutani, the president of the company which administers the copyright on Tezuka's works. But Matsutani insisted he had no plans to sue Disney. "Legal disputes do not help better understanding between Japan and the United States," he said. Disney denied Monday that The Lion King was influenced by Tezuka's 1960s cartoon television series created by Tezuka, who is also known for another series called Astro Boy. Both the Tezuka and Disney stories focus on orphaned lion princes who lose their crowns to a wicked adult lion and then reclaim their thrones. The Disney lion is named Simba. Japanese cartoonists and other fans of Tezuka, who is revered in Japan in much the same way as Disney, have been seeking action against Disney. Matsutani initially planned to remain silent, based on the wishes of the late Japanese cartoonist's family. But "his fans were not satisfied, he said, explaining why he had decided to take action. Japanese cartoonist Machiko Satonaka plans to send a letter to Disney, accusing the Hollywood entertainment giant of undermining Tezuka, which is known in Japan as "The Jungle Emperor."

Bangladeshi Islamic groups want Nasrin home for trial

DELHI (R) — Radical Muslim groups demanded Friday that the Bangladesh government bring feminist writer Taslim Nasrin back from her Swedish sanctuary and vowed to continue their street protests calling for her death.

"I ask the government to immediately bring her home and punish her for committing an unforgivable crime against Islam and its followers," said Moulana Matin Rahman, a prominent Islamic leader.

Ms. Nasrin, 32, arrived secretly in Stockholm Tuesday from Bangladesh, escaping death threats which had forced the physician-turned-author into hiding for two months.

She briefly emerged from hiding last week to be present in a Dhaka court when granted bail on charges of hurting Muslim religious feelings.

"The government had conspired to let her go, and it's the responsibility of the government to ensure her return to face the charges against her," Rahman said in a statement.

"If anyone had thought that we shall go off the streets and rest after the murder

(partate) Nasrin fled away, he is living in a fool's paradise," said one leader of the Islamic United Action Committee.

"There can be no let-up in the campaign until and unless the agent of Satan is appropriately punished," the Islamic United Action Committee leader told Reuters.

"If she continues to use her vulgar tongue and pen against Islam while in freedom, the government of Bangladesh will have to bear the responsibility for it," he said.

Nearly 500 Muslims from two small militant organisations demonstrated following noon prayers in Dhaka Friday, calling for Ms. Nasrin to be hanged.

Witnesses said the protesters paraded through the streets near Dhaka's Baitul Mokarram Mosque and dispersed peacefully shortly afterwards.

Police continued Friday a tight watch on the Swedish embassy and diplomatic missions of other countries that supported Ms. Nasrin, who went into hiding in Sweden immediately after arrival, saying she wanted to rest and work.

The Bangladesh government has said there was no

legal restriction on her leaving the country under her bail conditions.

Ms. Nasrin had been in hiding since June 4 after the government ordered her arrest for insulting Muslim religious feelings by telling India's Statesman newspaper that Islam's holy book, The Koran, should be "revised thoroughly."

Ms. Nasrin later said she was misquoted but the newspaper stood by its report.

Information Minister Nazmul Huda said in comments reported in the Inquilab newspaper Friday that a case against Ms. Nasrin on charges of hurting Islamic feelings was still pending at a Dhaka magistrate's court.

"(But) if someone does not appear in court personally, then the defence may not be as strong. In that case she may be convicted," he was quoted as saying.

"Once convicted, she will probably have to go straight into custody when she returns," he said.

Mr. Huda said some fundamentalist groups were trying to gain politically from the Nasrin controversy. "The government will take all measures, by using its own mechanism, to control the situation," he said.

Police chief's bid to cut Ulster patrols sparks anger

LONDON (AFP) — Protestant Unionists have reacted angrily to a suggestion by Northern Ireland's police chief that army patrols in Ulster might be reduced if the Irish Republican Army (IRA) called a prolonged ceasefire.

A unionist MP said the head of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) might have to be replaced.

RUC Chief Constable Hugh Annesley, speaking amid speculation that the IRA might be considering a truce in the coming months, had reiterated Thursday that a ceasefire might allow street patrols to be proportionately reduced.

"If the threat was to tail

down, then the level of overt army patrolling on the streets could be tailed down," said Chief Annesley, who has made similar statements in the past, as has Northern Ireland Secretary Patrick Mahew.

Chief Annesley added, however, that "for anyone to suggest that the army could be removed is naive in the extreme."

Some 19,000 British troops are currently stationed in Northern Ireland, primarily to support the RUC.

Ulster Unionist Party MP Ken Maginnis said Chief Annesley's comments showed he had "outlived his usefulness here" and suggested he might have to stand down.

Mr. Maginnis said Chief Annesley's comments would leave RUC officers feeling humiliated and give the IRA their biggest boost in a year.

"If we look at the level of violence in our community," said Mr. Maginnis, "it is ridiculous for the RUC to be parading and pandering to one section of the terrorist population."

Andrew Hunter, a Tory MP and chairman of the Conservative Northern Ireland Committee in the House of Commons, said Chief Annesley's remarks were wrong in timing and substance.

Prime Minister John Major's office declined to associate itself with Chief Annesley's comments.

The Northern Ireland Office said it supported the spirit of what Chief Annesley had said, although termed his choice of words "unfortunate."

"He is at one with the British and Irish governments," said a spokesman, "and there can be no moves to accommodate the terrorists until there is a permanent end to violence."

This Sunday is the 25th anniversary of British military intervention in Ulster, the official start of the bloody sectarian conflict between Roman Catholics and Protestants that has come to be known as "the troubles."

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Over 150 films to compete in Tokyo Film Festival

TOKYO (AFP) — More than 150 films will vie for prizes in the seventh Tokyo International Film Festival to be held from Sept. 24 to Oct. 2, the organising committee said. The committee said that 154 films would be shown in the festival in Kyoto, western Japan. Prizes will be awarded in two categories — the international competition and the young cinema. The festival, which originated in Tokyo, will be held in Kyoto this year as one of the events commemorating the 1,200th anniversary of the founding of the western Japan city.

S. Korea braces for showdown with radicals

SEOUL (AFP) — Thousands of South Korean riot police Friday braced for a showdown with radical students intent on staging a North-Korean inspired rally to mark the liberation of the peninsula from Japanese colonial rule.

Pyeonggi slammed Seoul for blocking the rally "in an unpardonable challenge to the ardent desire of the whole nation," warning the crackdown would only aggravate inter-Korean division and confrontation.

"The situation of the Korean peninsula is becoming all the more acute with each passing day due to the anti-communist hysteria of the South Korean rulers," Pyonggi said through its mouthpiece, the Korean Central News Agency.

North Korea has offered to send 10 delegates to Seoul through the truce village of Panmunjom Sunday. South Korea has rejected the offer, accusing Pyongyang of fanning unrest here.

Aug. 15 is celebrated both in North and South Korea as "Liberation Day," marking the end of Japan's colonial rule of the peninsula from 1910 to 1945.

In Seoul, riot police sealed off Hongik University by barricading the school's gates with garbage trucks after some 1,000 radicals from provincial schools gathered there overnight to prepare for the rally.

Groups of radicals with rocks, steel pipes and other ammunition guarded the school's strategic points against possible police raids.

shouting anti-government slogans.

In southern Seoul, another 600 students staged a rally at Seoul National University, denouncing the government's crackdown on "peaceful" pro-unification gatherings.

In the southern city of Kwangju about 300 students scuffled with riot police while trying to move out of Chonnam University campus to the city's main railway station, Yonhap News Agency said.

The radicals have called the "pan-national" rally from Saturday through Monday to coincide with similar gatherings in Pyongyang to promote unification of the divided peninsula.

The Seoul government, as in past years, has banned the gathering as a pro-North Korean action.

Sri Lanka rebels attack army camp; 67 dead

COLOMBO (AFP) — Tamil guerrillas Friday attacked an army camp in eastern Sri Lanka, killing 11 soldiers and losing at least 25 of their own men in fresh blood-letting that has left 67 dead in the island's war-torn regions.

About 100 Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrillas stormed the Kad-

dumuvikulam army base located in thick jungles in eastern Batticaloa district and simultaneously attacked two other nearby camps, officials said.

"Troops, though taken by surprise, were able to rapidly reorganise and carry out a quick counterattack on the terrorists forcing them to

withdraw after a firefight lasting approximately two hours," a Defence Ministry statement said.

"Troops searched the area and 25 terrorist bodies were recovered. A very large number of terrorists are likely to have suffered casualties. During the attack 11 soldiers

were killed and five were wounded," the statement said.

The LTTE guerrillas had kept the nearby camps of Thirukonamadu and Kathiraveli under a barrage of mortar fire to prevent army reinforcements reaching the besieged base, military officials said.

Bird with 9 heads reportedly seen in south China

HONG KONG (AFP) — Residents in southern China's Hainan province claim to have spotted a bird with nine heads in a mountainous area, and authorities are investigating the reports, a newspaper said here Friday. The China-backed Wen Wei Po daily said the bird — mentioned in records from the Song dynasty (960-1279) — was reportedly seen on several occasions by some 30 people, and was said to resemble a turtle dove. The daily said a government committee carrying out research on rare animals had received the reports from the residents and was looking into them. The bird, said to live on cloud-shrouded peaks of the Haping Mountains, was described by a militiaman named Zhang Shenyuan as having eight smaller heads around a larger one, with each bearing a complete set of beak, ears and eyes. Legend has it that appearances of the bird are bad omens, and no one has dared to try to catch the strange creature, the newspaper said.

Cambodia team to seek hostages' release

PHNOM PENH (R) — The Cambodian army has sent a team of intelligence officers to supervise negotiations with Khmer Rouge guerrillas holding three Western tourists as hostages, a senior staff officer said Friday.

"We've sent our officers to that place — officers from the intelligence bureau," he said. "These negotiations must be conducted very secretly."

The officer, based at Defence Ministry headquarters, said the Khmer Rouge had made no threats to kill the hostages and needed them for protection.

Mark Slater, 28, from Britain, Jean-Michel Braquet, 28, from France, and David Wilson, 29, an Australian, were taken hostage on July 26 after their Kampot-bound train was ambushed by Khmer Rouge guerrillas.

Thirteen people were killed in the attack, the eighth train ambush on the Kampot line in southern Cambodia since 1993. The Khmer Rouge still hold 16 people, including the three Westerners, three ethnic Vietnamese and 10 Cambodians.

The captives are being held at a base called Vine Moun-

tain, about 150 kilometres south of Phnom Penh. The guerrillas are demanding \$45,000 for each of the three Westerners.

The army has been encircling the camp where the three are held, raising fears among Western diplomats for their safety. But a minister said Thursday the government had agreed to negotiate with the rebels about payment of a ransom.

Khmer friends and relatives of the hostages and captors would be used as go-betweens in the negotiations, the officer said.

Health delays signal more problems for Clinton

WASHINGTON (R) — Reeling from a blow to a crime bill considered crucial to democratic prospects in November elections, congressional Democrats face a grim battle and worrisome delays in their health reform initiative.

President Bill Clinton, who has made the crime and health bills the pillars of his White House, urged Congress to stay in session through its recess to grapple with both of them.

"I don't think they ought to go home. You know, the people who are committing these crimes are not going to take a vacation," said Mr. Clinton. "Health care is not going to take a vacation either."

Last Thursday night, a tired-looking trio of Democratic congressional leaders emerged from a lengthy closed-door meeting and announced they had reached the same conclusion.

"We're going to be in (Friday) and most of next week on the crime bill," said House Speaker Thomas Foley of Washington state. He added that the House will start the health care debate, which had been slated to begin next Monday, as soon as the required congressional budget office data is ready.

But Mr. Foley said he does not know how long the House will have to wait for the budget reports and did not rule out having the House on a quasi-recess in which they would technically be in session but would actually be free to go back to their districts and be "on call."

And several members of the House have voiced worries that any further delay in

the health debate, even for technical budget reasons, could further damage prospects of mustering the 218 votes needed to pass a bill acceptable to Mr. Clinton and the Democratic leadership.

The Senate Friday starts a fourth day of debate on majority leader George Mitchell's health bill.

Sen. Mitchell said he hopes lawmakers can finally move away from the speeches that customarily mark the opening of debate and start dealing with the nuts and bolts of amendments that will determine what stays in the plan.

Procedural issues over the timing of votes, though sometimes seeming petty on the surface, mask serious power struggles over the course of the Senate debate, which in turn shapes the message the Senate can send to a skittish House.

In addition to being disheartened by the crime vote, some House members are wary of lending support to the controversial requirement that employers pay for most of their workers' insurance.

Ben Cardin of Maryland, a Democrat who strongly backs health care reform, said he does not think a brief delay to wait for budget numbers would be damaging but fears a lengthy postponement would be "a major mistake."

"We've got to get through this stage," he emphasised.

Republicans, however, have been pushing for delay all along. Peter Hoekstra, a Michigan Republican, said the House should not try to complete in the next eight days work that he believes requires eight weeks.

Both the House and the Senate bills are extremely complicated, and at some point there will simply not be enough time to debate the 1,400-page bills, reconcile their different components in conference, and bring the combined version back to the House and Senate before congressional elections in November.

Reform advocates toiled in Senate speeches to get beyond the political battles and talk about how the bill would help sick people get the care they need.

Harry Reid of Nevada, for instance, told a moving story about a 29-year-old woman on the brink of death in a hospice. She had no insurance and could not get the treatment that might have saved her life, he said.

But fellow Democrats, like Bob Kerrey of Nebraska and David Boren of Oklahoma, bitterly attacked the Senate bill.

"Let's not ram something through on a party line basis," said an angry Sen. Boren. He objected to passing a law that would trigger new requirements under unknown circumstances eight years from now and urged lawmakers to "go back to the drawing board" and "show some common sense."

Congress, was to fly to Minneapolis Friday for a hastily arranged speech plugging the bill at a National Police Association meeting.

On Thursday, lawmakers rejected, 225 to 210, a procedural resolution that would have cleared the way for final action on the omnibus anti-legislation.

With midterm elections less than three months away, the defeat was particularly galling for Clinton because 58 Democrats defied him to join all but 11 Republicans. Until the final moment, Mr. Clinton's allies in Capitol Hill had predicted approval by one or two votes.

House Democratic leaders announced late Thursday they would immediately undertake another push for passage.

Shortly after the defeat, Mr. Clinton told a White House news conference the loss was "disheartening" because, he said, 225 members of the House decided to "participate in a procedural trick."

"I worked my heart out on it," he said. "I did everything I could, and on this day the NRA (National Rifle Association) and the Republican leadership had their way."

The NRA had campaigned against the bill's provisions outlawing 19 assault-style weapons. Republicans had complained about its \$7 billion in crime prevention programmes on the ground they were duplicative and ineffective.

Mr. Clinton said he wanted Congress to find ways to salvage key elements of the package of police, prevention and punishment measures.

Policewoman fired after posing nude

WARSAW (AFP) — A Polish policewoman is no longer "fit" to continue in her job in Gdansk after posing nude for the pornographic magazine Peep Show, according to her boss quoted in the daily Zycie Warszawy. Krzysztof Szymanski said he hoped that Edyta P., 22, who posed for the photographs long before she began work as a policewoman a few months ago, "will resign, otherwise she will be fired." Her bosses, said the young woman, who is currently on sick leave, could no longer patrol the streets in uniform as "nobody would take her seriously."

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World News

U.N. fears Rwanda refugee camps may stay for years

GOMA, Zaire (Agencies) — Teeming and disease-ridden Rwandan camps around Zaire's border town of Goma will turn into semi-permanent refugee zones unless more people can be coaxed to return home, U.N. relief officials said Friday.

"Goma is becoming a new Gaza Strip where refugees will stay for a long time," U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) spokesman Panos Moutzidis told reporters.

Likening the fate of some 800,000 people living in cholera- and dysentery-plagued camps around Goma with the one of Palestinians who lived in Israeli-occupied territories, he said it could take a generation before they returned home.

UNHCR had never been

confronted with such a resistance to repatriate, he said. "The unwillingness to return is the strongest we have seen in such crises, even in Somalia."

In Kigali, the head of the U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) said raw fear was dominant emotion among thousands of Rwandans after ethnic bloodletting and civil war that erupted last April and in which half a million people died.

Catherine Bertini, the agency's executive director, said nearly all the refugees she met on a trip Thursday to camps in the southwest warned they would flee to Zaire when French troops guarding a "safe haven" pull out in about 10 days time.

"Virtually every person we spoke to said they were afraid

for their lives and their security and planned to move to Zaire before the French pulled out," she said in Kigali Thursday.

U.N. force commander Major-General Romeo Dallaire says as many as one million refugees and 1.5 million local residents in the French zone could flee towards the Zairean town of Bukavu.

Around Goma, to where an estimated one million Rwandans fled, refugees are suffering from malnutrition, cholera, dysentery and now possibly typhus.

UNHCR estimates that at least 27,000 people have died during the past month in the Goma area, mostly from a cholera epidemic — which has now peaked — and from dysentery.

About 120,000 have so far gone back across the border but most of them fear to return, preferring to take their chance with camp conditions than risk rumoured reprisals at home.

The camp inmates are mostly Hutus, whose kinsmen have been blamed for the massacres of 500,000 minority Tutsis and opponents of the ousted Hutu government.

The former self-declared Hutu government and its defeated army in exile are telling refugees they will be slaughtered if they return to their homes despite U.N. assurances it is safe.

Mr. Moutzidis predicted that hatred was so deeply entrenched now in Rwanda that Hutus and Tutsis would be unable to live again in harmony for years.

"It could take an entire generation until people develop more tolerance to each other," he said.

UNHCR was nevertheless making plans for a possible massive repatriation from Zaire.

Mr. Moutzidis said UNHCR told donor countries at a meeting in Geneva Thursday that between \$40 and \$50 millions needed to be budgeted for the possible repatriation of 500,000 people.

Four weeks into the Rwandan refugee crisis, he deplored that the international community's response to a humanitarian drama of unprecedented proportions was not stronger.

"Our needs are not even covered in Goma," he said,



A Rwandan woman carries a sack of rice during a food distribution by members of the Red Cross near the border of Rwanda and Uganda. Despite the improvement of daily life

not counting the Bukavu area, some 100 kilometres south of here, from where the French troops are due to withdraw.

About two million Rwandans are estimated to have fled outside the country and the new Rwandan government has made their return a priority.

Prime Minister Faustin Twagiramungu said this week Rwanda would have no real economy, political life or stability without them.

Contacts between elders coming from refugee camps and the Tutsi-dominated Rwanda Patriotic Front (RPF), which ousted the former government, to allow for a safe return of exiles were continuing, Mr. Moutzidis said.

Five clergymen from the Goma camps who went to Kigali three days ago were expected back Friday, he said.

Seven other representatives crossing the border to assess the situation. He said they would be able to see that at least 14 waystations had been set up along the road between Gisenyi, just across the border from Goma, to the town of Ruhengeri to help refugees go home.

Food distribution resumed Friday at the Kibumba camp after a day's suspension because of rioting, the U.N. refugee agency said, warning that many Rwandan refugees in the area were clearly there to stay.

Officials of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Thursday met camp leaders at Kibumba near this east Zairean town. They promised that "they will restore discipline," after a refugee was lynched during the distribution of rations Wednesday, Mr. Moutzidis said.

Meanwhile about 400 of

Zaire's best troops are to be withdrawn from this border town following a protest by thousands of residents and refugees fed up with their thievery and thuggery.

Prime Minister Jean Kengo Wa Dondo acknowledged Thursday that the troops, sent to Goma to help with the Rwandan refugee crisis, "got the situation out of control."

"In view of what happened, the first lesson is that troops responsible for that situation must be arrested and brought to court," Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo told Radio Zaire.

"Second lesson, in Goma and in Bukavu must be withdrawn and replaced by other contingents in order to avoid the recurrence of this situation," the prime minister said.

The soldiers sent to Goma were drawn from the Presidential Guard and other elite units, raising concern about

the quality of the troops that will replace them.

Mr. Kengo Wa Dondo spoke in Kinshasa, the Zairean capital, after briefing President Mobutu Sese Seko on a riot by more than 5,000 people in Goma Thursday that briefly blocked food convoys.

The nearly two-hour protest by residents and some refugees was set off by the shooting death of a well-known currency dealer by a Zairean soldier demanding money.

The victim's body was carried through the streets on a wooden stretcher by the demonstrators, who pelted troops with stones and blocked streets with large rocks and trash.

Goma residents claim that the soldiers have conducted house-to-house extortion campaigns and robbed Zairean citizens and Rwandan refugees alike at gunpoint.

Nigeria oil union vows to wreck installations if junta bans it

LAGOS (AFP) — Nigeria's powerful Petroleum Workers' Union warned Friday that it will wreck oil installations if the junta bans it after more than a month of a crippling strike to press its political demands.

"We will hit back if they try anything in that direction. It will be the worst the nation has ever seen. What we mean exactly in our Wednesday's press statement by 'violent reactions' is the destruction of oil installations," a top union official told AFP.

The National Union of Petroleum and Natural Gas Workers (NUPENG) and its sister senior staff association, PENGASSAN, began their strike on July 4 to pressure the military government to resign.

"We got the information from impeccable sources in (the federal capital) Abuja that the government was planning to proscribe the union. We are only telling them the grave consequences of such a step," said the official, who asked not to be named.

Labour and Productivity Minister Samuel Ogbemudia Thursday denied in talks with oil workers that the junta was currently planning any such measure, but later comments to reporters gave a different impression.

"Proscription is a remedy," he told the union officials. "It can only be applied if there is an ailment. For now, there is no ailment, so we can first and foremost try to resolve the matter through dialogue."

The unions want the junta to free Moshood Abiola, the opposition leader held to have won presidential elections last year before the military annulled the poll, and install him as head of state, as well as releasing other political detainees.

Mr. Abiola is on trial for treason after declaring himself president in June. His arrest has led to bloody protests and police opened fire last week on demonstrators in Lagos, killing at least three people.

A few minutes after the talks in which he assured union officials that the government did not plan to outlaw NUPENG, Mr. Ogbemudia nevertheless hinted to journalists that a ban might be imminent.



A group of armed civilians with M-1 rifles march in the streets of Port-Au-Prince after finishing their military training. The Haitian military is training civilians to defend the country against a possible invasion by the U.S. (AFP photo)

U.N. prepares last-ditch mission to Haiti

UNITED NATIONS (AFP) — U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali will send an envoy to Haiti in the hope of persuading the military junta there to step down and avert a U.S.-led invasion, diplomats said Thursday.

They said that Dr. Ghali outlined his plans in a meeting with the U.N. representatives of the United States, France, Canada and Argentina, which backed the initiative.

The mission would not involve a reopening of negotiations nor a new attempt at mediation, the diplomats said. The U.N. envoy would simply ask the military leadership in the Caribbean nation when and how it would leave.

A Western diplomat, who asked not to be named, said the emissary could also ask the junta how the international community could help it step down and avoid military action spearheaded by the United States.

Argentina proposed Wednesday that the mission be undertaken by Dante Caputo, its former foreign

minister and currently a representative of the United Nations and the Organisation of American States.

The U.N. Security Council authorised on July 31 an eventual U.S.-led military intervention to allow the return of President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, toppled in a coup d'etat in September 1991.

Two U.S. warships with 1,800 Marines on board left their Norfolk, Virginia, base Thursday to replace five vessels currently off the coast of Haiti in what the Pentagon described as a routine rotation.

Spokesman Dennis Boxx said the assault ship USS Wasp and the transport vessel USS Nashville should arrive in Haitian waters Sunday to replace the ships that were carrying 2,840 troops, including 2,000 Marines.

But Mr. Boxx denied that this represented a diminished U.S. presence, saying the capacity of the force would remain the same, as would its mission of being ready to evacuate U.S. citizens if necessary.

The United Nations brokered an agreement signed on July 3, 1993, by Mr. Aristide and Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras that provided for the ousted president's return at the head of a democratic government in Haiti.

But the military has refused to cede power, despite a U.N. economic embargo and other sanctions. U.N. diplomats believe that if the junta continues to defy the world community, the United States would have no choice but to invade.

The diplomats added, however, that U.S. President Bill Clinton might not take any immediate decision to launch the operation, which polls show is opposed by a hefty majority of Americans.

The said the idea of dispatching a U.N. emissary to Port-Au-Prince was also aimed at heading off another diplomatic initiative proposed last week by Venezuela.

Caracas had pushed for a mission comprised of the foreign ministers of Latin American states opposed to an American invasion of Haiti.

Castro wants 'rapid' move on U.S. emigration policy

HAVANA (R) — Cuban President Fidel Castro again called for the United States to take measures to change its policy on Cuban emigrants, hours after U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno moved to thwart any attempt to Cuban exiles to spur an exodus from the Caribbean island.

Underscoring Ms. Reno's announcement Thursday was the arrest in Florida keys of three Cuban-Americans accused of piloting a speedboat to Cuba to pick up 22 refugees and bring them back to Florida.

Mr. Castro's call late Thursday for "rapid, efficient and serious" steps to change U.S. immigration policy toward Cubans, which Havana says encourages illegal emigration, came in a Havana news conference televised live by Cable News Network.

"We continue to demand that they put an end to this policy," said Mr. Castro, shown wearing his trademark

fatigues. Under U.S. law, Cubans fleeing their country are eligible to apply for permanent resident status after living in the United States for one year.

Mr. Castro also said a naval officer was shot and fatally wounded in the hijacking of a vessel Monday from the Cuban port of Mariel toward the United States.

State television footage showed the body of the naval officer, who it said was killed by a naval recruit who hijacked the vessel.

Last week, Mr. Castro warned that if Washington did not change its policy on Cuban emigrants, Havana would stop trying to prevent people from trying to leave the island of relatives in Florida from coming to pick them up. He raised the spectre of an exodus like 1980's Mariel boatlift, in which a disorganised flood of 125,000 Cuban boat people arrived in Florida.

Coup trial verdict is bad for democracy — Gorbachev

MOSCOW (R) — Former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev said Friday that the acquittal of the last of the men accused of trying to overthrow him in 1991 was a bad sign for Russian democracy.

"I think we should be concerned about it," he said in a telephone interview. "Such events are of importance to the state and to society."

"If our courts and legal bodies react in this way to such events, it will be difficult for us to move towards a new, democratic Russia."

Mr. Gorbachev, 63, was commenting on the Russian Supreme Court's decision Thursday to acquit former Soviet ground forces Commander Valentin Varennikov on treason charges.

Gen. Varennikov was accused of supporting the State Emergency Committee which announced on Aug. 19, 1991, that it was assuming power in the Soviet Union. The coup collapsed after two days and the Soviet Union broke up four months later.

The 12 main figures were amnestied and freed from jail by the Russian parliament last February. Gen. Varennikov, however, insisted on being tried in an attempt to clear his name.

He and the other former defendants say it is Mr. Gorbachev who should go on trial for causing the break-up of the Soviet Union.

Mr. Gorbachev dismissed such calls as "political demagoguery." He defended himself against the allegations, saying it was the coup plotters who had sealed the fate of the superpower.

He described his efforts in the first eight months of 1991

to secure a new union treaty, binding the 15 constituent republics into a looser, more devolved union.

"It was a difficult process, but it led to a union treaty, to the preservation of the union, all union structures, the president, the Supreme Soviet (parliament), a single citizenship, a single army," he said.

Mr. Gorbachev said the coup plotters, who acted to stop what they saw as dangerous decentralisation, had given "the disintegration such impetus that it was impossible to stop."

He said Gen. Varennikov had taken an active part in supporting the coup and it was strange he had been acquitted.

But the main point of the trial was that the court had sought to distance the defendant from the State Emergency Committee, thereby implying the committee had been guilty, he said. "So there was one useful thing the court did."

"It was a strange trial because it wasn't clear who was actually on trial," Mr. Gorbachev said. "It was strange because all former (committee) members, who had themselves been on trial and who organised the August coup, came as witnesses."

"It was strange that, independent of the verdict, Varennikov could not be put in prison."

The eight committee members were all senior Communists, including the Soviet vice-president, prime minister, defence minister, interior minister and KGB chief. Interior Minister Boris Pugo shot himself when the coup failed.

Burundi army deployed to halt violence

BUJUMBURA (R) — Burundian troops cordoned off the university in the capital Bujumbura Friday in the latest effort to quell days of bloody ethnic unrest which many fear could erupt in chaos similar to that in neighbouring Rwanda.

State radio said a grenade hurled into a covered market on Thursday killed several people. Fifteen had already died in clashes that exploded after the arrest of Mathias Hitimana, an opposition Tutsi politician accused of inciting violence.

"Those who were near the point of the explosion say some died," state radio said, referring to Thursday's grenade attack.

Unrest between Tutsis and Hutus, in which hundreds have died nationwide in recent weeks, led U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali to consider sending a mission to try to head off a bloodbath, officials in New York said Thursday.

Militant Tutsi youths went on the rampage following Sunday's arrest of Mr. Hitimana, head of the Party for the Reconciliation of the People.

The youths, manning barricades and chanting "iboro", slang for "kill the Hutus," paraded the city at times during the week and university students vowed to boycott classes until Mr. Hitimana was released.

"We are firm in our position and we will not go back. That is our decision," a student representative said.

Troops from the mainly Tutsi army shot in the air to disperse youths who burned barricades of car tyres in the northern Ngagara suburb Thursday.

By Friday morning, Ngagara appeared calm. Troops had relaxed security in the area, swarming with armed Tutsi militants.

Burundi has teetered on the abyss of renewed tribal violence since last October, when renegade Tutsi soldiers murdered Hutu President Melchior Ndadaye.



Armed soldiers sit on an armoured personnel carrier guarding the central square of Grozny, the capital of the breakaway Republic of Chechnya as members of the Chechen National Congress gather for a session (AFP photo)

Chechen mobilisation seen as aimed at internal enemies, not Russia

MOSCOW (AFP) — Chechen President Dzhokhar Dudayev's decision to put his breakaway republic on a war footing appears less designed to guard against alleged Russian invasion plans than to crush his internal opposition, analysts said Friday.

Mr. Dudayev, who unilaterally declared his Muslim republic independent in 1991, declared martial law and ordered a general mobilisation Thursday to counter what he said was an imminent Russian invasion to bring Chechnya back under Moscow's control.

The Chechen leader also warned that half a million Muslim warriors were ready to give their lives in a "jihad" against Russia.

But a Moscow-based Western diplomat said Mr. Dudayev's moves were seen here as "more an internal question."

Russia "would never intervene... He's threatening in order to scare the opposition," said the diplomat, who asked not to be named.

Mr. Dudayev is clamping down on an increasingly bold opposition while gambling that Russia will keep out of the crisis, he said.

ITAR-TASS news agency reported that Mr. Dudayev

also declared a state of emergency in the opposition stronghold of Nadterechny in northwestern Chechnya, where a Moscow-based opposition movement is based.

And the Congress of the Chechen People that Wednesday authorised Mr. Dudayev to order the mobilisation at the same time sentenced the main opposition leaders to death in their absence for "subversive terrorist activity," ITAR-TASS said.

"The mobilisation, of course, is not aimed against the Russian army, but as a crusade" against opposition forces, wrote military analyst Pavel Feigenhauer in Sevodnya newspaper Friday.

"Dudayev as usual hopes that (Russian President) Boris Yeltsin will not respond to the challenge and that he will take no action to neutralise the armed, rebellious regime," Mr. Feigenhauer wrote.

The opposition has set up a shadow government in Nadterechny called the "Provisional Council," calling for Mr. Dudayev's resignation and claiming to control much of Chechnya's territory.

Opposition leader Yavargi Mammedov said Tuesday that the Congress of Chechen

People's resolution "actually marks the beginning of a civil war," ITAR-TASS reported.

Mr. Dudayev, a former Soviet Air Force general and nuclear bomber pilot, accuses Russia of orchestrating and arming the opposition. Anti-Dudayev leaders have acknowledged receiving funding from Moscow.

The military strength of both sides in the country of 1.2 million people is uncertain.

According to Krasnaya Zvezda, the official Russian army newspaper, Soviet forces left behind a considerable arsenal in Chechnya: 42 tanks, 38 armoured cars, 565 anti-tank rockets, 1,700 machine guns, 1,000 grenade launchers, 37,758 automatic rifles and several military helicopters and planes.

But "some of the forces which Mr. Dudayev says are his are loyal to the other side," said the Western diplomat.

"Who's loyal to Dudayev and who's loyal to the opposition, that's the question," he said. Although Russia has vowed to keep its forces out of Chechnya, a civil war would make the Russian-Chechen border uncontrollable, warned a Yeltsin military advisor Friday.

Jordan Times

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Mother of all blunders

THE ALGERIAN Islamists have committed the mother of all blunders by issuing threats to students and teachers to abandon schools and universities in that country. Such ultimatums to high school and university students as well as their mentors will naturally hurt the cause of the Islamists who were betting on wider popular support to their cause. This clearly counter-productive step was taken after so many months of strife marked by violence.

In retrospect the Islamists enjoyed greater support not only from within the country but also from the outside world when they were arbitrarily deprived from reaping the results of democratically-held elections more than two years ago. There were many voices which sounded the alarm then about ending the democratisation process in the North African country only because the outcome indicated that the fundamentalists were gaining in the elections.

But to translate this setback to democracy into first violence and then to a full-fledged fight against education is doubly dangerous. How can any political party expect to enjoy support from the people when it decides to take on students and teachers? What future awaits Algeria without proper education for its future generations? Any interruption in the educational process, even if confined to high school and university, is of dire consequence to the national interest of the whole country. The damage could be irreversible and the Islamists do not seem to comprehend the damage that it is doing to itself as well as to Algeria by its latest threats against teachers and students.

We still think the solution to Algeria's conflict lies in meaningful and sincere dialogue among the different forces that make up that nation. We believe that the Islamists are entitled to their say in governing just like anybody else. Still no political party has the right to have a monopoly on power in any given country. Democracy is not democracy if it is not pluralistic first and foremost. This much the "Islamists" do not seem to respect. Winning elections cannot be used as an excuse to impose a uniform socio-political system on the people. The Islamists therefore, must commit themselves to democracy for now and for always. At the same time the Algerian government must show more willingness to share power with those elements that are not on the same wavelength with it.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A COLUMNIST in Al Ra'i discussed the peace process noting that since Jordan is a democracy where everyone has the right to talk about the issue of peace with Israel and to contemplate over the outcome of the negotiations. Bassam Emoush, a member of Parliament, also said that participation in the peace process should be the decision of the Jordanian people, their government and their representatives in Parliament rather than a single person's decision. He said that the decision should be a national one so that no party can be blamed should the talks fail and no one can claim the glory for any success. The peace negotiations in their present status, the writer said, focused on secondary matters, leaving the substance untouched and postponed indefinitely. Emoush said that no-one has gained anything from the talks so far except the Israelis who gave the Arabs mere promises which no one can guarantee would ever be honoured. The writer said that despite the lapse of three years since the Madrid conference, no land was returned and the status of Jerusalem still hangs in the balance though the Arabs went to the negotiations on the basis of U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338. Furthermore, the United States, which claims to be the sponsor of peace talks, has not taken any steps towards stripping Israel of its mass destruction weapons.

TAHER AL UDWAN, a columnist in Al Dustour, reflected on statements given by Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin immediately after the Aqaba meeting that the question of Palestinian refugees was never mentioned neither was the issue contained in the Washington Declaration. Furthermore, said the writer, Rabin told a press conference that the borders with Jordan had never been demarcated before denying the fact that they were delineated under the British mandate. If these words were said just to appease the Israeli opposition one can overlook their meaning for the present moment, but if they were not then it is only reasonable to say that such attitude can by no means be conducive to peace with Jordan, said the writer. The Jordanian-Israeli agenda signed in Washington in September provides for the discussions and the settlement of the Palestinian refugees question in a satisfactory manner and the agenda can by no means conflict with the Washington Declaration, and so the refugee question is very much alive, noted Udwan.

Jordanian Perspective

Streamlining the internal scene

By Dr. Musa Keilani

HIS MAJESTY King Hussein's directive on Wednesday to His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to lead Jordan to the new era at the head of a Royal Commission capped another week of dramatic events that took Jordan and Jordanians on major leaps in contemporary history.

The Royal directive has to be seen in the very broad perspective of the changes in the Middle East political scene after the historic Washington Declaration and the fast pace of burying some of the features of the 46-year state of war that existed between Jordan and Israel. The two countries have now open telephone lines, a new crossing in the south and another is planned soon, plans are being shaped to link the Israeli and Jordanian national power grids, the flow of people is being facilitated, Israel has started pumping water to Jordan as a goodwill gesture, Israeli-Jordanian air links are being discussed and the King is expected to visit Hebron and Jerusalem soon in his capacity as a Hashemite Arab Muslim and guardian of the Holy Shrines there.

Against the backdrop of those measures and events which have more of an external facet, the internal scene also has to be streamlined and prepared to meet the challenges of the new era of peace.

The Royal directive has to be seen in this context. It is no secret that for many years, Jordan's bureaucratic scene under different prime ministers and governments has been characterised by inefficiency and corruption.

Precious public resources were wasted on white elephant projects to the benefit of a few. Mismanagement and lethargy have been the main features of public service. On many occasions, qualified people have been brushed aside to make room for those with waste, and nepotism and favoritism plagued the scene.

Indeed, with the economic shock of 1988-89, things changed, and we have made large strides in streamlining most sectors of the economy. But that streamlining had only been relative and fell far below the desired target of turning Jordan into a country where efficiency and devotion mark public services, where the private sector gets preferential treatment and things get done fast. The change in the situation was more or less limited to the essential necessities of meeting the requirements of the economic restructuring programme agreed with the International

Monetary Fund (IMF) and its affiliates.

Our successful democratisation process aside, the steps that were undertaken on the ground since 1989 left a lot to be desired in terms of raising the level of bureaucratic efficiency and commitment to responsibilities on the national level. That is not to say that we have not made progress, but that progress was limited to the immediate needs which could not be set aside if only because of the pressure that we faced from outside.

No doubt, government servants were and are doing their job at varying degrees of efficiency and seriousness, but just that. And that is where the problem lies — a trend to retain the traditional basic approaches to issues rather than moving away from tradition and adopting new visions.

I could see some people gritting their teeth and swearing at me for saying it and raising all kinds of counter arguments. But that does not change the reality that the nature of our bureaucracy and public sector has not come anywhere near a level that should propel our country on the road towards self-reliance let alone towards becoming another success story such as we hear from the Far East.

The nation-building skills of our people need no testimony. A close look at the Gulf states is all that is needed to show how our people could be innovative bureaucrats while being sensitive to the needs of the society and how they could be intelligent businessmen.

Now, at the juncture of history where we are on our way to getting rid of the burdens and political and economic preoccupation with a conflict that plagued us for nearly four decades, we have to be well-prepared to meet the challenges that face a people who seek to break free from the senseless chains that tie us down and limit our vision.

To those who argue that Jordan and Jordanians are no different from other Third World countries, I ask two simple questions: Is it enough to sit back and do little and say that we are not different? Isn't it our duty to ourselves and the society at large to do something about changing ourselves by drawing from the experiences of other Third World countries and avoiding the pitfalls that have made the Third World remain Third World?

We have no dearth of human resources; nor do we lack entrepreneurship. But are they used in the right channels and in the right direction? Are they allowed to flourish with encouragement and help from those who are in charge of

our economy?

The most significant feature that distinguishes Jordan from the loose definition of the Third World is that the Kingdom is going to find itself under a large international magnifying glass in the wake of the breakthroughs in the peace process and the economic opportunities that a peaceful region offers.

We simply cannot afford to be seen as a society where ill-conceived notions of bureaucracy and civil service inhibit national growth not only by placing constraints on our private sector but also on innovative skills. On the contrary we have to put in a lot of extra effort with a new vision towards meeting the objective of projecting the right image to the international community that Jordan indeed is the best place in the Middle East to launch investments. We have to show the world that we are indeed different from other Third World countries if only because of our innovativeness and openness.

And His Majesty has named the right man to lead us to this objective by taking the bull by its horns and turning it around by proceeding further in creating the "right social, political, intellectual and economic fabric of our lives." The far-sightedness and vision of Crown Prince Hassan have been time tested, and one cannot think of anyone else in Jordan better suited to do the job in whatever qualities and skills that take to make a success of the huge task of bringing about fundamental changes in approaches in all walks of our life.

From whatever vantage point, there is very little, if any, contradiction between our social and cultural traditions and setting the stage that offers our country as the right conduit to anyone to Middle East economy and business as well as tourism. Of course that does not mean we open our beaches to nudists and allow our coasts to be the playground for international playboys and girls. Certain lines have to be drawn and respected, and that is a point businessmen from anywhere in the world understand.

Indeed, the challenges that face His Royal Highness are tremendous. What he confronts is a maze of criss-crossing "traditions" that have little to do with our culture and society and practices which will resist change. But then that is the nature of any society and should be overcome with firm steps and resolution, two of the many qualities that the Crown Prince is well-known for.

Fast race to peace leaves media breathless

Reviewed by
Elia Nasrallah

THE LOCAL newspapers focused in the past week on the implementation of the Washington Declaration embodied in the opening of the Araba border crossing and the meeting in Aqaba between King Hussein and the Israeli prime minister. These events mark the start of implementing the Washington Declaration and the removal of all barriers of hatred and enmity between the two sides.

The King-Rabin meeting in Aqaba and the opening of the border crossing, said Al Dustour daily, are great political events. These events mark the start of implementing the Washington Declaration and the removal of all barriers of hatred and enmity between the two sides.

Sawt Al Shaab daily described the opening of the border crossing as a translation of the intentions expressed in the Washington Declaration which in turn was based on the concept of the Jordanian-Israeli common agenda. The opening of the crossing point also marks the beginning of the demarcation of common borders which, the paper said, is a clear Israeli recognition of the Kingdom's rights to its lands and water resources.

In the view of Ahmad Al Misch, a columnist in Al Ra'i, the events of the past week fall within the framework of a series of events which began with the conclusion of the Egyptian-Israeli peace pact.

The current events are historic in nature as they mark the end of an era of conflicts in the region and is one in which the people of the Middle East find themselves passing through a turning point and a transitional period of time, said the writer.

The developments in the Middle East, he added, can also be described as part of



a series of events that came in the wake of the downfall of the Soviet bloc and happening under the overwhelming sole superpower now dominating the affairs of the world.

Yousef Bouran, a columnist in Al Ra'i, described the present stage in the Middle East history as one fraught with serious challenge for every one. Dealing with our Israeli neighbour, said the writer, requires very high-quality performance on the part of the negotiators themselves and the Jordanian people at large who, the writer said, should not show fear and apprehension but rather a high sense of responsibility and united ranks.

As we realise that Israel has defeated us militarily, said the writer, we ought to work hard to win the battle in our dealings with the Jewish state in obtaining our lawful rights.

Three factors can deter-

mine the fate of the peace process in our region, said Saleh Al Qallab in Al Dustour. The peace process should involve all parties, including Syria and Lebanon, otherwise any deals with Israel will be incomplete, he said.

Second, Arab citizens should concretely feel the benefits of the coming peace politically, socially and economically and third,

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Israel should stop its present aggressive and repressive policies against the Palestinians and the Arab countries and should stop stealing Arab land and water resources, said the writer.

If the Palestinians continue to feel humiliated by the Israelis, all deals aiming towards a settlement would remain meaningless and futile, added Qallab.

Taber Al Udwan, another columnist in Al Dustour, said that with the visit to Aqaba by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Jordan and Israel have taken the first steps towards political, economic and tourist normalisation.

Although these fast-moving events are being slowly absorbed by the Jordanian man in the street, one can say that the process

of peace making is quite impossible to hold back any more and one has to accept the concept that Jordan is heading for a genuine peace that can guarantee its legitimacy rights.

However, said the writer, while Jordan and the Arabs have offered so much, Israel has offered very little, something which does not contribute towards assuring the people about the future of peace.

Tareq Masarweh tackled the question of holy places in Jerusalem noting that Jordan's success in assuming the role of supervising and caring for these places is a service to the whole Islamic Nation.

The columnist who writes for Al Ra'i daily, said that Jordan does not compete with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) over the sovereignty of Jerusalem. Criticising Saudi Arabia for trying to fuel the PLO's uneasiness resulting from Jordan's success to keep the holy places under its custody, the writer said that the Palestinians should rest assured that Jordan does not harbour any ill intentions but will remain an ally of the Palestinian people.

Sultan Al Hattab discussed the same theme, criticising those who create points of difference between Jordan and the PLO before the end of the Israeli occupation. Jordan, said

the columnist for Al Ra'i daily, has held the responsibility of caring for the holy places before and during the Israeli occupation of the holy city and this responsibility does not infringe on that of the Palestinian political and geographic responsibility for the city. Indeed, the holy places, said the writer, should serve as a catalyst for fusing solidarity among the Arabs and the Muslim nations.

A columnist in Al Ra'i mentioned the complaints of the Jordanian farmers concerning their produce and the plight of those who produce tomatoes in great quantities but fail to earn the cost of their production.

Yousef Al Ghazu said that the Ministry of Agriculture and its affiliated departments are to be commended for their research and other efforts to help the farmers produce better crops but nothing has been done to date to help the farmers market their products at home and abroad.

The ministry ought to interfere to determine the cropping patterns in Jordan and should help the farmers grow crops in a balanced manner and in quantities that are certain to find their way to the market, said the writer.

Mohammad Sabethi, a columnist in Al Dustour, demanded that the Social Security Corporation introduce measures to ensure people against unemployment. There is need for special legislation that would conform to the provisions of the constitution that guaranteed the right of all people to work, said Sabethi.

The writer said that the government ought to establish a special fund to finance the project through collections from the working workforce for the benefit of the unemployed and the needy. He said an additional tax can also be created to fund this vital project for the community.

Security forces in front line of Northern Ireland's 'troubles'

By Caroline Brothers
Reuters

BELFAST — For the security forces caught up in Northern Ireland's 25 years of conflict, the toll makes grim reading.

Nearly 1,000 members of the police and army in the province have been killed and 13,000 wounded as the Irish Republican Army (IRA) wages its campaign to end British rule.

As the most prominent targets in the political and sectarian strife, euphemistically known as "the troubles", they account for almost a third of the victims of one of the world's most

deep-rooted conflicts.

More than 3,000 people have been killed and 36,000 wounded in the battle between the IRA fighting to unify Ireland and Protestant extremists determined to prevent it.

"The police and army are holding the ring, preventing death and injury among the two communities, until someone comes up with a political solution that allows the people of this island to live together," Chief Superintendent Jim Boyd told Reuters.

"There really is no military solution," he said in an interview at Belfast's Brooklyn barracks, head-

quarters of Northern Ireland's Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC).

In the 1960s the RUC was a sleepy police force of 3,000 officers dealing with break-ins and petty crime.

Today it is four times that size, backed by 17,000 British soldiers, and has expertise ranging from combatting terrorism to tackling organised crime.

Three soldiers with automatic weapons protect each police officer on the beat. Bullet-proof army vehicles patrol nearly every town.

The two forces work in tandem to combat extremist groups on both sides of the province's sectarian di-

vide and have gained world-class expertise in the process.

"We do everything that any other police force does — lost dogs, missing children, burglaries, thefts of cars," Mr. Boyd said.

"But on top of all that we have to be aware we could be walking into a situation where gunmen are waiting or booby traps laid."

Car crashes and explosions have lured police to booby-trapped scenes — bodies found dumped in leafy lanes are left lying for hours while disposal experts comb the area for mines.

During the past 25 years, extremist violence in Northern Ireland has undergone several mutations. "Terror shifts and terrorists don't employ the same tactics all the time," said Mr. Boyd, who's been with the RUC for 32 years.

"In the early seventies we were facing street disturbances, lots of shooting incidents and bombs going off all the time — and a lot of the killing was indiscriminate," he said.

"Then in the early eighties it was recognised that terrorism is a very fancy word — and really what we're talking about is very well organised crime."

He said both the IRA and the Protestant extremists needed extensive funds to buy arms and ammunition, pay activists and support the relatives of prisoners who are ineligible for state funds.

"Organised crime, to flourish, needs finance," he said. "Our experts in anti-racketeering would claim the IRA needs somewhere in the region of seven million pounds (\$11 million) to run their organisation each year, and the loyalists (those fighting to keep Northern Ireland part of Britain) about four million (\$6 million)."

Features

West, Islam on collision course in new world

By Nicholas Doughty
Reuter

BRUSSELS — The West and Islam, struggling with centuries of mutual hostility and misunderstanding, seem to be on a new collision course as the millennium approaches.

The tragedy, experts say, is that it need not be so.

Now that the all-embracing struggle between communism and capitalism is over, rich Western nations are worried by the growing influence of Muslim militants in countries like Algeria, Egypt, Iran and Bangladesh.

It is fashionable to talk about the new "crescent of crisis." What if vital oil supplies are cut off? What if one of these countries gets a nuclear bomb? If Algeria turns fundamentalist, will other Muslim countries also fall, bringing a flood of poor immigrants to Europe?

Killings in Algeria and Egypt, allegations that Iran is behind terror campaigns, persecution of writers and dissidents, and the obvious delay the Western-style democracy to take root in many Muslim countries — all of these things trouble the West.

Many of the world's predominantly Muslim countries in areas like Northern Africa and the Middle East are poor. Militancy is fuelled by long-standing resentment against Western colonialism, by poverty and anger with inefficient or corrupt regimes.

In the Middle East, where the peace process is fast changing the political map and bypassing radicals on all sides, there are fears that extremists could step up terror attacks following the recent bombing of Jewish targets in Britain and Argentina.

"We are heading for trouble because of misunderstanding and misperceptions," said Heiko Kopietz, an independent consultant with detailed knowledge of Islamic culture.

"Islam is not a threat to Western civilization but the West does not understand Islam," he told Reuters.

That no sides seem entrenched in their attitudes, conditioned by past conflicts, cultural differences and the growing gap between the world's rich and poor.

The Middle Ages were filled with battles between Christians and Muslims — from the Moorish invasion of Spain to the bloody Crusades. In more recent times, Western colonial powers exploited and colonized the Muslim World.

After World War II, many Muslim countries became little more than pawns in the cold war superpower game.

However, experts argue that the perception of a new threat to the West is based largely on misunderstanding, fuelled by media and governments prone to oversimplifying complex issues and fearful of what they do not understand.

The phrase "Islamic fundamentalism" conjures images of rabid crowds, the export of terrorism, summary executions, a lack of individual and press freedom and the subjugation of women.

But Mr. Kopietz and others say Islam is essentially a peace-loving religion based on respect for others, a view taken by the vast majority of the world's 1.3 billion Muslims.

As with any other religion, there are numerous factions and vigorous debate about the meaning of holy writings and the role of Islam in modern societies, even within Islamic nations.

The idea of a worldwide Islamic threat is a myth, say Western experts. The world is too diverse and most of the problems are too local. Even the world by the West is a myth, they say.

"Although there is a real influence throughout the region, its policies are pragmatic and constrained by its economic difficulties," the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies said in its latest annual survey.

Dilip Hiro, author of a recent book on Islamic fundamentalism, wrote this week in a British newspaper that the West was the guilty of hypocrisy on a massive scale — something which he further argued the West.

Countries such as the United States, Britain and France have professed support for democracy and were been outraged by the Iranian "fatwa" seeking the death of British author Salman Rushdie for alleged blasphemy against Islam.

But they have also turned a blind eye to the Algerian government's cancellation of elections after the first round in 1992.

Washington and others have also all but ignored the democratic deficit in the production of Gulf Arab states, which spend billions of dollars on sophisticated military hardware.

Muslims regard the West as a blind eye to the Algerian government's cancellation of elections after the first round in 1992.



People during a demonstration in Avenue de l'Independance in the centre of the capital, Algiers, last week.

Islamic extremists more daring, as government founders

used.

The killings were followed by threats against France, and against Algerian students and teachers returning in September to state high schools and universities, which they called centres of apostasy.

The Islamic fundamentalists have made substantial progress in isolating the government.

A shaken French government refused to abandon its former colony after last week's attack — a group of its remaining nationalists in more easily defended strongholds — the Netherlands responded by closing its embassy and Belgium ordered its citizens to leave.

The United States remains but has cut down ties around its embassy to help spot potential threats.

Remaining foreigners, reduced mostly to diplomats, company workers and various contractors, face constant danger and need armed protection to travel.

The government is losing ground, literally. Areas of its vast North African country, larger than France, Germany and Spain combined, are now largely autonomous.

Police venture to the urban strongholds of Islamic extremists only in great forces or not at all. Attacks on government troops in the Aurès Mountains are made only by aircraft.

In the Kabylie, the mountainous region east of Algiers, ethnic Berbers have formed self-defence groups to beat back forays by fundamentalists seeking to seize village arms.

The bodies of the Frenchmen killed last week were given state honours in Paris. Algerian Prime Minister Mokdoud Sifi called for yet another meeting of political parties for a dialogue on ending the crisis.

But many were likely to boycott, and the leaders that really count — those of the Islamic Salvation Front — were uninvited, in jail.

And the offer was unlikely to sway the Armed Islamic Group, which claimed responsibility for the attack against the French.

The most radical Islamic faction, it said the group's holy warriors carried out the attack against a housing block inhabited by Jews and Christians that was allocated by the government of apostasy and infidelity.

Algerian authorities claim the extremists are tearing themselves apart in internal factional fighting.

The Armed Islamic Group attacked the French compound two days after police found the body of one of its leaders and nine followers shot to death in a cave.

But the Islamic groups insist they are united with Algerians in seeking an Islamic state.

There is no way to accurately measure support for extremism, or the government that promised a "transition" to democracy within three years.

But in an eerie echo of France's Algerian war, when Paris insisted that the nationalists were an insignificant minority before finally granting independence in 1962, French Interior Minister Charles Pasqua claimed: "There is no support among the Algerian masses for the terrorist elements."

Jordan and Israel resume talks on trade

(Continued from page 1)

progress in cooperation in energy and tourism.

Israeli Energy Corporation Director-General Moshe Katz met with his counterpart from the Jordan Electricity Authority (JEA) and agreed to "advance plans to link the two countries' electricity networks." The linkage, according to plans, will help each other during peak-hour demands.

The linkage is expected to come at three points; one in the north, one near the Dead Sea and another further down near the newly opened Araba Crossing near Aqaba and Eilat.

There was no immediate confirmation from Jordan. But the Jerusalem Post said Jordanian and Israeli technicians were scheduled to meet next week at a site called Soom to discuss the matter.

Jordan and Israel also agreed that the tourism ministries of the two countries would cooperate on joint marketing of tourism packages including sites in both countries, the report said.

Subeith, a Jordanian diplomat, said the Jordanian government is keen to ensure that tourism is not just a means to the end but a goal in itself. He said the Jordanian government is keen to ensure that tourism is not just a means to the end but a goal in itself.

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U.S. approves aid to Jordan

The U.S. Congress has approved a \$15.8 million foreign aid bill that includes relief for Jordan in the peace process.

The two largest recipients of U.S. aid were Israel and Egypt, which received \$2.1 billion and \$2.1 billion.

The foreign aid bill includes \$220 million as the first installment in President Clinton's pledge to wipe out the 700-million-dollar debt owed by Jordan.

The remainder of the debt was to be scrapped in return for progress made in implementing the July 25 Washington Declaration.

"This is a step, one initial step, taken with Democrats and Republicans agree that it would promote the peace process in the Middle East," said Democratic Senator Patrick Leahy.

The bill, which passed the House of Representatives on Aug. 4, was approved by the Senate by a vote of 88 to 12.

Palestinians to co-administer crossings

(Continued from page 1)

Israel will administer the other section designated for Israeli and visitors to the rest of the West Bank and to Israel.

Dr. Shaath said about 100 Palestinian officials, including policemen, passport inspectors and tax officials, would take over the Palestinian section of the terminals as of Aug. 21.

He said the two sides have agreed to build another terminal in Rafah within six months that would be able to handle five times the current capacity.

About 200,000 passengers travel between Egypt and Gaza every year, Dr. Shaath said. Hundreds of thousands mainly Palestinians, also travel across the King Hussein Bridge, the main crossing point between the West Bank and Jordan.

"I expect this terminal to handle not only 200,000 passengers a year. I expect it to handle millions a year because this is the gateway that will bring not only Palestinians in the thousands but also ... other Arab tourists who now will come because there is a Palestine starting here in Gaza and in Jericho," Dr. Shaath said.

There was no PLO reaction meanwhile to a warning by Mr. Rabin on Wednesday that reported comments by the head of the PLO's foreign affairs department, Farouk Kaddoumi, violated the Israel-PLO peace accord and would harm the peace deal if repeated.

Israel's Hina news agency

Britain battles chemical, biological horrors of war

Dr. Paul Meakins
Reuter

LONDON — Clutching a bottle of the simulated nerve agent VX in his left hand, Graham Pearson said: "There is enough in here to kill 30,000 people."

But the bottle in his right hand represented an even more chilling threat: "This is simulated tularemia — a bacterium that, if delivered in the right conditions, could infect everyone in the world."

In a post-cold war era of regional conflicts around the globe, chemical and biological warfare are cheaper to launch than nuclear attacks and could, with growing expertise, offer a deadly new scenario of plagues, gases and killer viruses.

Dr. Pearson's job, as the head of Britain's Chemical and Biological Defence Establishment, is to halt their spread and defend troops against two of the deadliest and most feared weapons of war known to man.

The establishment works on everything from respirator masks and chemical detectors to vaccines and armaments. With a team of 600 ranging from mathematicians to mathematicians, it acts as an antidote to Armageddon.

He says his establishment is more vital now than ever before: "Chemical or biological warfare is seen as a way toward the poor man's atomic bomb."

"We have to continue to be alert. I worry about regional conflicts because it could be easier for smaller countries to obtain chemical and biological weapons. They need less sophistication than a nuclear programme. It's cheaper too."

Anthrax, sprayed from the back of an aircraft on a cool, calm night, could take out all of Washington D.C. this could cause up to three million fatalities compared to two million from a hydrogen bomb," he said, citing one U.S. report.

Dr. Pearson, leading international cooperation with the U.S., Canada and Australia, preaches the need for "a web of deterrence" — protective measures, intrusive arms controls, a concerted international response to cheaters and broad export controls.

"Ten nations are assessed as having biological weapons programmes and almost twice that number have, or are aiming to acquire chemical weapons," he said.

On chemical weapons, a recent U.S. study pointed the finger of suspicion at several Middle Eastern and North African countries from Israel to Libya as well as North Korea, Taiwan and China.

Dr. Pearson said: "Russia has a formidable chemical warfare capability — 40,000 tonnes is what they say they have."

The Chemical Weapons Convention was opened for signature last year. More than 150 countries have now signed it and it is due to enter into international force next January.

Britain is among those leading international efforts to strengthen verification measures under the Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention.

Britain battles chemical, biological horrors of war

The establishment at Porton Down was set up in 1916 during World War I when chlorine and later mustard gas were first used by Germany against British troops. By the end of the war, 184,000 were injured and 8,800 killed by chemicals.

From the legacy of that horror is a natural paradox — the establishment was set up in 2,900 acres (2,330 hectares) of chalk grasslands in southern England which have remained virtually untouched since then.

Scientists fight chemical and biological warfare in a habitat that boasts more butterfly species than anywhere else in Britain. Stone Curlews, grassland spiders and 35 billion ants thrive in a haven for conservationists.

"People are surprised. They expect everything here to be dead," Dr. Pearson says, gazing out at rolling grasslands bathed in summer sunshine.

That makes the contrast even more stark when he takes visitors on a tour to see how far preventive measures have evolved over the years.

He shows off a black veil — "the soldier's uniform of the cloth and used it to cover their nose and mouth," he said of the first shaky attempts in 1916.

The room is full of hooded ghosts of past agonies — vacant eyepieces stare out from gas masks ranging from the primitive to today's \$10 with its sophisticated speech transmitter. It was the preferred choice of reporters in the Gulf war against Iraq.

Dollar punished as mark reigns supreme

LONDON (R) — The dollar extended losses against a rampant mark Friday and looks vulnerable to a further decline as fears of rising interest rates continue to grip financial markets, currency analysts said Friday.

It lost nearly a pence from European opening levels to stand at 1.5520 marks by 1200 GMT and was down around four pence from Thursday's European high.

The selloff in the U.S. currency was triggered by a surprise interest rate hike from both Italy and Sweden on

Thursday. The moves prompted speculation that the German interest rate easing process may have ground to a halt.

The resultant exodus from global bond markets on the back of interest rate jitters has only served to heighten the German currency's allure.

"There has been no bounce at all in the dollar. I would suggest that the market is still long (of dollars) and there's still room for it to go down," said John Cox, vice-president at Bank of New York in London.

"At the moment there is no evidence of people liquidating long dollar positions," added Mr. Cox.

Dealers said they will be looking closely at next week's U.S. Federal Open Market Committee meeting for their next clue to dollar direction.

"I think the Fed (Federal Reserve) will raise rates next week but that's in the market — I think the Bundesbank won't," said Neil Mackinnon, chief economist at U.S. bank Citibank in London.

"Technically the move through 1.5730 marks opens up the downside for the dol-

lar and I am looking for a move down to around the 1.52 area," he added.

The dollar's misery was compounded by the poor demand for the last leg of the U.S. quarterly refunding and a tough defeat for President Bill Clinton over a crime bill.

It had slipped to 99.87 yen earlier in the day compared with 100.58 late Thursday in Europe.

But the speed of the dollar's descent has triggered some talk in the market of a possible rescue mission by central banks to support the ailing U.S. currency. However,

analysts were sceptical of such talk, but did note that talk in late morning trade that the Bundesbank has been checking rates on dollar/mark helped the dollar off session lows.

"The Bundesbank could come in at any time," said one senior dealer at a U.S. bank in London. "You have to be careful about getting short down here, it's not a one-way bet."

The flight into marks saw the German currency romp ahead on the cross rates, crushing the lira in its wake. The Italian currency hit fresh

record lows throughout the morning session and had slumped to 1026.50 per mark from Thursday's 1006.20.

The Bank of Italy raised discount and Lombard rates by half a percentage point to 7.5 per cent and 8.5 per cent respectively, while Sweden raised the lending rate by half a point to 8.0 per cent and the central repo rate to 7.2 per cent.

The Swedish crown, although eclipsed in the news stakes by the lira's slump, lost further ground to stand at 5.0200 per mark versus 4.9685.

NAM experts call for massive debt reduction

JAKARTA (AFP) — A group of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) experts called Friday for a 70 per cent reduction of the foreign debt owed by struggling low-income nations.

"Scaling down the debts of low and lower-middle income, heavily indebted developing countries by 70 per cent on average, would seem to be an appropriate objective to be aimed at in international debt policy," said a report submitted by the group Friday to Indonesian President Suharto.

It said that the ability of indebted countries to resume economic growth through domestic saving, investment and new foreign capital inflow were already limited by their existing debts.

The problem is further aggravated by the competition from eastern European countries in drawing assistance and investment from wealthier nations and organisations, the summary said.

"Debt reduction needs to be sizeable to make a difference to the economic future of low-income and lower-middle-income debt-affected countries," it said.

The scaling-down should also be applied to all major types of credits — bilateral

official creditors, private sector lenders and multilateral creditors.

It added that private sector and multilateral lender debts were bigger than those owed to official bilateral creditors, which the report said were "not being serviced anyway at present."

Simply rescheduling debts would only aggravate the problem of poorer nations because of the mounting cost of the interest-on-interest effect, it said.

It said that 32 — or two thirds — of the 58 heavily indebted countries in 1992, were classified as least-developed countries. Their total debt stood at \$248 billion.

Their arrears in scheduled debt servicing, which the report said were a key indicator of a country's debt burden, were much higher than the 20 per cent of them having arrears exceeding 50 per cent.

Many of these countries, with per capita income of between \$60 to \$650, were already faced with negative growth rates, and the severe difficulties they had servicing their debts resulted in a persistent accumulation of arrears.

Political limbo put Nordic markets in firing line

STOCKHOLM (R) — Currency speculators pounced on the Swedish currency Friday, spooked by Thursday's shock interest rate rise, and Nordic neighbours also felt the heat.

Speculators hulled the crown down nearly 1.5 per cent past a psychological level of five crowns to the mark. By 1130 GMT it stood at 5.03, near its lowest level since its November 1992 float, after ending Thursday at 4.96.

"Sweden's central bank (Riksbank) has painted itself into a corner. It has shown its

weakness by raising rates to defend the crown and the speculators will see how far they can push it to see what it does next," a currency-market chief trader said.

In Sweden and Finland especially, the combination of market doubts about government's ability to deal credibly with major economic problems amid political uncertainty, pushed already soggy currencies and weak state bonds further into the mire.

Bond and currency market analysts said the Swedes had

completely missed the point by trying to tackle a problem with its roots in state borrowing by using a short-term monetary instrument. Some feared the Finns might do the same.

"They are trying to be tough, but it looks more suicidal," said Lehman Brothers' analyst Keld Holm, drawing parallels with the autumn 1992 crisis when the Riksbank's attempt to defend the crown with 500 per cent interest rates failed miserably.

"The Swedish central bank

is not in touch with reality. It can't be a surprise for them to see this reaction — they've seen it before — so it shows their lack of skills," he added.

Virtually without exception, economists and analysts say the reason for the crown's weakness is a crisis of investor confidence in Swedish politicians' ability to take tough fiscal policy decisions and reduce enormous state debt.

A dramatic bond-market boycott in July by Swedish insurer Skandia, one of the

Nordic region's largest investors, was perhaps the clearest demonstration yet of this concern.

Yet when the Riksbank raised its rates, governor Urban Backstrom said the country's prevailing political uncertainty, stoked by a general election on Sept. 18 to be followed by a referendum on EU membership in November, had not been a factor.

Mr. Backstrom said the bank increased its central repo rate by 28 basis points to 7.20 per cent and its ceiling

leading rate by half a percentage point to 8.00 per cent to make a preemptive strike against signs of rising inflation.

Economists dismantled his carefully-constructed analysis of the external and internal elements in the Swedish inflation picture one by one and reached another conclusion.

"The Riksbank is seeing inflation ghosts that no one else can see," Nordbanken's chief economist Olle Djerf said. "The move is counter-productive and dangerous," he added.

Dollar expected to come under renewed pressure in coming quarters

This report, covering the period from Thursday, Aug. 4, 1994 until Wednesday Aug. 10, 1994, is provided by Naser Nabulsi, private client group at Merrill Lynch-Dubai

U.S. dollar

Fundamental view:

The dollar continues to trade well above its recent mid-July lows as market participants anticipate another Fed tightening around the time of the Aug. 16 FOMC meeting. We expect the dollar to come under renewed downward pressure in coming quarters, despite prospects for the Fed funds rate to reach five per cent or a bit higher early next year.

Against a backdrop of weak confidence in U.S. foreign policy and ongoing trade and capital account deficits, marginally higher U.S. interest rates are likely to offer scant attraction to foreign investors, especially Japanese, who have suffered massive currency losses on their dollar assets. We maintain 12-month targets of DM/USD 1.50 and JPY/USD 95.

Technical view:

The dollar's rebound from the record lows of July 12 could be developing as a sign of renewed dollar strength. However, until all indicators suggest so, the recent gain is being viewed as a counter trend move from a heavily oversold condition. Moreover, some of the newspaper headline focus on the fallout of the U.S. dollar has waned and at the same time the U.S. dollar index has gained four per cent over the past four weeks. It seems as though the decoupling between bonds and the dollar could be developing. This was evident last Friday when the U.S. dollar remained steady despite U.S. bonds selling off on the negative July U.S. employment figures.

Although the obstacle for the dollar's strength at present is by how much will the Fed increase interest rates, medium term momentum measures need to improve some more to suggest that a bottom is fully in place. For now, the U.S. dollar should strengthen some more against the Japanese yen, Deutschmark, and the Swiss franc over the near term while the British pound should regain some momentum and at the same time the Australian and Canadian dollar should also strengthen against the U.S. dollar.

Japanese yen

Fundamental view:

The dollar has bounced back to the JPY/USD 101 level after having plunged to the JPY/USD 96 level in mid-July. Many analysts appear to believe that the dollar has bottomed against the yen, pointing to prospects for more rate hikes in the U.S., signs of a diminishing trade surplus in Japan, and a new stance by U.S. economic officials to talk up the dollar. We think the administration and market participants alike will be surprised at how difficult it will be for the U.S. to stabilise the dollar for the following reasons:

- (1) Confidence in U.S. foreign policy leadership seems unlikely to improve substantially anytime soon;
- (2) Capital outflows from the U.S. are likely to persist, even with higher U.S. rates; and
- (3) The U.S. trade and the current account deficit is likely to remain around 2% of GDP, larger than the appetite of foreigners for U.S. assets.

The trend toward reduced outflows of private sector capital from Japan, associated with the collapse of the real estate bubble, is unlikely to end anytime soon, which should keep the yen stronger than other fundamentals might suggest. Dollar weakness is likely to require persistent Bank of Japan dollar-buying efforts in coming quarters in order to make up for the private sector's unwillingness to finance ongoing U.S. deficits. We maintain our forecast for the yen to reach JPY/USD 95 in 12-months time.

Technical view:

The Japanese yen has weakened since July 12, losing 3.8 per cent against the U.S. dollar. Short term momentum measures are still overbought to suggest that a correction back through 101.40 JPY/USD and perhaps beyond to 106-112 is underway. Medium term momentum measures are also deteriorating to support the idea that a move towards 101.40; then 106-112 is possible over the next few weeks to months. Resistance exists at 97.20 and then below 93.00.

However, the present question is whether a top is in place for the yen. It would seem that a test near the recent highs is needed before a top is firmly in place. Sentiment has become oversold for the first time in seven weeks.

Pound sterling

Fundamental view:

The British pound held steady against the U.S. dollar in the face of dollar strength against the yen and the DM, continuing to trade during the week around U.S.\$/GBP 1.54. With the DM down against the dollar, the pound traded higher against the DM, at DM/GBP 2.44. The pound's strength was based on market expectations of a hike in U.K. base rates, expectations fuelled by statements by the governor of Bank of England.

We continue to expect a 50 basis point hike in U.K. base rates in the fourth quarter. This combined with the 50 basis point cut in the German discount rate expected after the October election should move the U.K.-German interest rate differential in favour of the pound.

The pound continues to bask in impressive numbers on the fundamentals in U.K., with GDP growth outpacing inflation, a rate occurrence in the last three decades. With the DM expected to strengthen against the U.S., and the pound to strengthen against the DM, we expect the pound will appreciate to 1.50 U.S.\$ in six to twelve months time.

Technical view:

Over the past week, the British pound has gained slightly against the U.S. dollar. This is on the back of a two per cent loss it sustained following its recent July 12 high of 1.57 U.S.\$/GBP. Short term momentum is oversold and short term sentiment is also oversold to respect the possibility that the pound could challenge the recent highs.

Resistance does exist at 1.58 U.S.\$/GBP. A move to that level would most likely serve to create an important top. This would be supported by deteriorating medium term momentum oscillators. Support exists at 1.51 U.S.\$/GBP and the lower end of the trading range at 1.46 is second support.

Deutschmark

Technical view:

The Deutschmark has lost 4% (since July 12 through Aug. 5) against the U.S. dollar. Short term momentum is still overbought on the Deutschmark as a result, we should allow for weakness through 1.60 DM/USD and also allow for 1.616. Deutschmark support exists at 1.49-1.52, but an

eventual test of the 1992 highs at 1.39 cannot be ruled out. Similar to that of the yen, the present question is whether a top is in place for the Deutschmark. We would most likely need a test of or near the recent highs first. This would be supported by medium term momentum measures which are starting to work off an overbought condition. Additionally, sentiment measures have moved into oversold levels.

Swiss franc

Fundamental view:

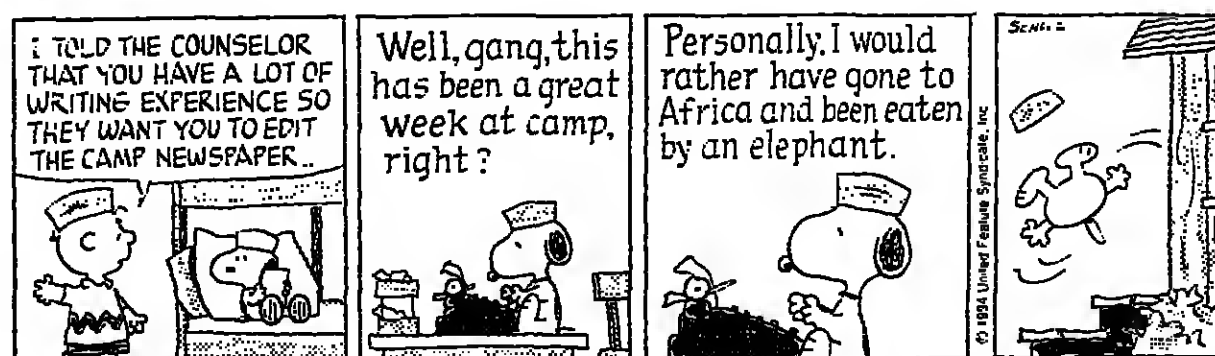
The Swiss franc held steady against the U.S.\$ and the DM, trading around SF/USD 1.33 and SF/DM 0.84. Despite the dollar's current strength against the Swiss franc, in the longer-run, our forecast calls for the franc to trade higher against the dollar, to SF/USD 1.26 in twelve months. This is based on our forecast for continued market strength against the U.S.\$ and the franc holding steady against the mark. Swiss authorities are expected to match possible future German rate cut to avoid any upward pressure on the franc. That should help the franc hold the line against the mark.

Technical view:

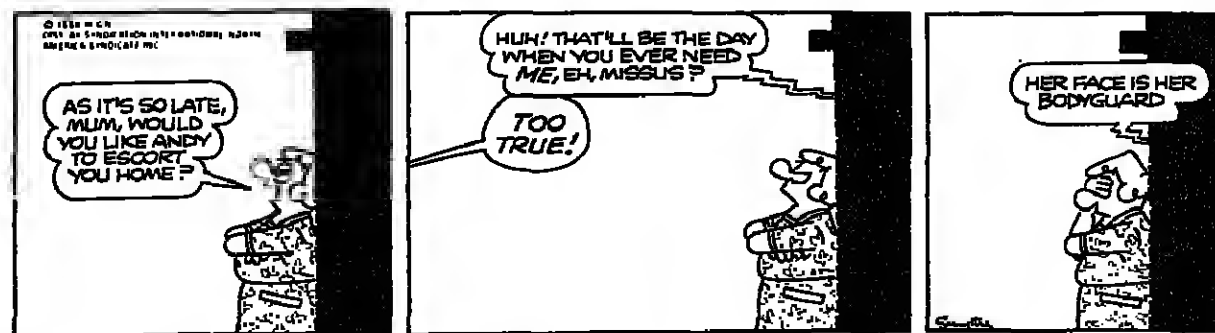
Along with the British pound, the Swiss franc gained versus the U.S. dollar over the past week gaining slightly less than one per cent (.80%). However, since its July 12th high of 1.29 SF/USD the Swiss franc has lost 3.7% through last Friday. With a current price range of 1.34-1.33, the Swiss franc is closer to strong support levels at 1.38-1.39 than resistance of 1.23-1.26.

Short term momentum is poor to suggest that the Swiss franc could encounter further weakness. This would also be supported by poor medium term momentum measures. However, short term sentiment has improved and is oversold which implies any correction that does develop should be relatively short lived.

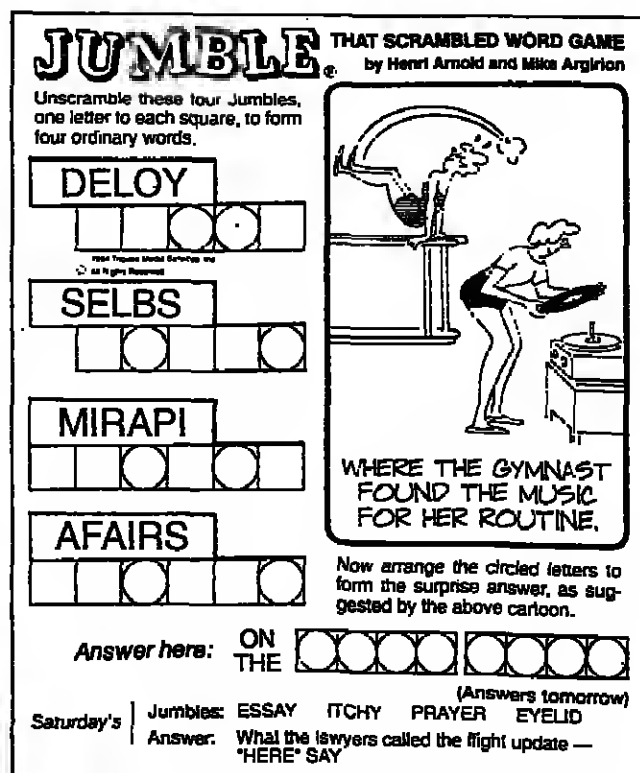
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



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Amra Hotel Shops. Amman.

Horoscope not received

THE Daily Crossword by Stanley A. Whitton

ACROSS

- 1 Cole Porter classic (with 17A)
- 6 Golf bag lath
- 10 Golf hazard
- 14 Danger
- 15 Pleasant
- 16 Flat ingredient
- 17 See 1A
- 20 Mountain in Texas
- 21 Supper
- 22 Orchestra members
- 23 Nolen or Mag
- 25 Classifiers
- 27 Most ordinary
- 30 Mexican media
- 31 Blue-pencilist
- 32 "The Woman..."
- 35 Dos Passos trilogy
- 38 Inquisitive
- 39 Items in a mystery
- 40 Ruler
- 41 Kind treatment
- 42 Versifiers
- 43 Mellow, the lawyer
- 44 Prevaricator
- 46 Attempted
- 48 River in North Carolina
- 50 Close
- 51 Constructed
- 52 Indian water container
- 53 Existence
- 54 Thompson film (with "The")
- 57 Yemen seaport
- 58 Simians
- 60 Rhone River leader
- 64 Social bomb
- 65 Clang
- 66 Curves
- DOWN
- 1 — lacho
- 2 Basketball team
- 3 Baseball's Speaker
- 4 Fun
- 5 Building wing
- 6 Children's
- 7 Ostentatious display
- 8 Pale yellow
- 9 Once called
- 10 Clans
- 11 Sincerely
- 12 Hurts
- 13 Favorites
- 14 Harmon rooms
- 15 Lunatic
- 16 Embarrassed
- 17 Shopper's delight
- 18 Saharan
- 19 Heart
- 20 Not weeping
- 21 Page of song
- 22 Young men's org
- 23 Away from the shore
- 24 Chair
- 25 Shoe material
- 26 Bovine name
- 27 Cereal grain
- 28 A Chaplin
- 29 Roman date
- 30 Passenger
- 31 Gates at
- 32 snooty
- 33 Mummy

Palladium enjoys the summer heat

LONDON (R) — Palladium, long outshone by other precious metals, is having a record summer as Japanese imports soar, helped by consumers buying machines such as yogurt makers and portable air conditioners to cope with sweltering heat.

"Japan is where it's at the moment and that's being driven primarily by electrical and electronic output," said T. Hoare Co. metals analyst Rhona O'Connell.

Palladium is used in everything from electrical and electronic goods, such as the current Japanese fads, to tooth fillings and converters to help cut car pollution.

Its price has risen to the highest in five years, finally bringing it to the attention of investment funds which in the past have ignored it in favour of gold, silver and platinum.

"Palladium is certainly the flavour of the month," Mr. O'Connell said.

According to analysts at CRU International, Japanese imports of palladium were 28 per cent higher in the first five months of the year. In all of 1993 the country bought a record 70.46 tonnes.

Mr. O'Connell said the mobile phone industry in particular is soaking up increasing Japanese imports of palladium.

Though the amount going into hot-weather gadgets in Japan has not yet been quantified, she said the run in Tokyo shops adds to the positive sentiment in the worldwide market.

"That's a booming area and obviously it would help (to sustain prices) to a certain extent," she said.

At Friday's London fixing, palladium was set at \$152.25 an ounce, compared with around \$125 at the start of the year.

Despite the fact that past rallies have been short-lived, market analysts expect prices to stay high this time.

Last year, the global supply of palladium was 4.26 million ounces, 125,000 ounces less than demand, according to the London-based Johnson Matthey, the world's leading refiner.

"There really is demand out there," said CRU International analyst Tony Warwick-Ching, "and the Russians weren't doing what they did last year, which is selling into the rallies, so the price continues to climb up."

Even with increased supplies expected from Russia and South Africa, analysts were unconcerned.

"This is a decent equilibrium level, given that at the moment the market is very tight," Ms. O'Connell said.

"The dynamics of the market suggest that it can easily absorb any extra supply at the moment," she said, noting that the European vehicle market was picking up and the Japanese market also looked poised for a turnaround.

In the longer term, strict

environmental legislation in California will increase the amount of palladium needed for auto catalysts for engines using lead-free fuel.

California requires vehicle emission levels to be halved by 1998. The rest of the United States tends to follow California's cue and Europe is expected to join in about five years later.

"I see growth in the use of all three metals (used in auto catalysts to clean up car exhausts) — platinum, rhodium and palladium," Michael Steel, the market research director of Johnson Matthey, told Reuters in a recent interview in Japan.

"But growth in palladium seems greatest since it is starting from a lower base and you have to use more weight per car," he said.

Though most analysts forecast that the palladium price would reach \$160 in the near future, they did not think it would climb higher without manufacturers looking for a substitute, which could in turn send the price back down.

"If the market really got its knickers off, I suppose it could have a challenge at the historic high of \$180, but I don't think it would stay there for long," Ms. O'Connell said.

banks and other financial companies to offset a relative decline in credits to companies in recent years.

UAE banks have just recovered from the problem of bad debts that inflicted heavy losses on many of them in the mid-1980s and forced some institutions to merge to avert collapse.

The problem was caused by a rush in providing loans during the oil boom of late 1970s and early 1980s. Many debtors were unable to keep up repayments after business sharply receded due to a drop in oil prices and the 1980-1988 Iran-Iraq war.

The central bank, seeking to prevent a repetition of the problem, issued instructions to the 47 banks last year setting a ceiling of credits to companies and individuals.

Meanwhile, low interest rates have forced UAE national banks to slash their deposits with banks abroad

Prisons swelling with debt defaulters

UAE interior ministry urges banks to curb loans

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) interior ministry has issued a rare appeal for local banks and financial firms to curb loans, saying its prisons were swelling with debt defaulters.

"The minister has noticed that a large number of people have been imprisoned in debt cases because of their involvement in debts that surpass their financial ability," the ministry said in a statement published Friday in local newspapers.

It added the problem was also due to "the fact that banks and other financial and commercial companies are offering large facilities to those people without making sure of their ability to repay on time."

"The ministry appeals for all those banks and institutions to take the necessary measures to make sure of the ability of their clients to repay their debt. It also appeals for individuals not to get involved in transactions that exceed their financial capabilities," the statement said.

The statement did not elaborate on the defaulters but there has been a surge in personal loans extended by

and switch to stocks and other investments.

The central bank said that deposits by the 19 local banks, invested mostly in Japan, Switzerland, France, the United States and other industrial countries, plunged to 32.5 billion dirhams (\$8.85 billion) in March from 41.9 billion dirhams (\$11.4 billion) at the end of 1992.

The bank said in a study that their investments in stocks and bonds surged to 6.45 billion dirhams (\$1.75 billion) from 4.2 billion dirhams (\$1.14 billion).

The decline in bank deposits pushed down their total foreign assets to 49.1 billion dirhams (\$13.37 billion) from 55.9 billion dirhams (\$15.25 billion) in the same period, the study said.

Total assets, including foreign and internal assets, remained almost unchanged at around 116 billion dirhams (\$31.6 billion).

"It is normal that the banks shift to other investment instruments to ensure higher profits," a UAE bank manager told AFP. "Apart from stocks, investments were also concentrated in local credits."

Central bank figures showed credits and loans provided by the national banks to the local market soared to 55.7 billion dirhams (\$15.17 billion) by March from 48.6 billion dirhams (\$13.24 billion) by the end of 1992.

Given the absence of other major business opportunities in the region, their domestic investments rose to only 1.22 billion dirhams (\$332 million) from 1.11 billion dirhams (\$302 million).

Credits to the external market, included in the foreign assets also remained almost unchanged at nearly 8.6 billion dirhams (\$2.43 billion) while investments in other foreign sectors in-

creased to around 1.23 billion dirhams (\$335 million) from 1.18 billion dirhams (\$321 million).

The switch from overseas bank deposits and the surge in domestic credits, caused by an economic upswing in the Gulf, enabled local banks to make record profits of \$403 million in 1993.

"Another record performance is expected this year as there is big demand for credits," a UAE banker said.

"What also helps us is the widening gap between interest rates on deposits and loans."

The central bank said last week it had also slashed its own deposits with foreign banks to invest in government bonds and bills. It said this had boosted its net profit by 35.7 per cent to around \$218 million in 1993 from \$160.6 million in 1992.

The central bank report showed local banks were not

affected by the decline in interest rates locally and the collapse of the Bank of Credit and Commerce International, which was controlled by the UAE emirate of Abu Dhabi.

Deposits with the 19 banks fell slightly to 68.1 billion dirhams (\$16.8 billion) in March from 62.3 billion dirhams (\$16.97 billion) in March 1992, according to the report.

Unlike national banks, external assets of the 28 foreign banks based in the UAE increased to 14.4 billion dirhams (\$3.9 billion) from 12.5 billion dirhams (\$3.4 billion). The increase was mainly due to a rise in bank deposits to \$2.61 billion from \$2.2 billion.

The report showed a large increase in credits by the foreign banks over the past two years but they virtually had no investments in the local market.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Friday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.3828/38	Canadian dollar
	1.5510/20	Deutschemarks
	1.7428/38	Dutch guilders
	1.3015/25	Swiss francs
	32.04/08	Belgian francs
	5.3290/40	French francs
	1587.3/8.8	Italian lire
	99.68/78	Japanese yen
	7.7887/87	Swedish crowns
	6.8320/70	Norwegian crowns
	6.168/74	Danish crowns
One sterling	\$1.5460/70	
One ounce of gold	\$377.70/378.20	

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Exxon ordered to pay fishermen \$286.8m

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AFP) — A federal jury Thursday ordered the Exxon Corporation to pay \$286.8 million in damages to commercial fishermen for losses from the catastrophic 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill.

The verdict capped 23 days of deliberations on claims by more than 10,000 fishermen who had sought \$895 million from the top U.S. oil producer to compensate for damage to fishing grounds and fish prices.

The jury ruled in June that Exxon and the skipper of the Exxon Valdez tanker recklessly caused the worst oil spill in U.S. history, which dumped nearly 41.6 million liters (11 million gallons) of crude into prime fishing waters.

The damages ruling Thursday closed the second phase of the trial, covering claims for compensation for actual economic losses after five years of cleanup, scientific research and legal haggling.

The jury still has to decide how much Exxon and the captain should pay in punitive damages, designed to punish and deter future acts. Fishermen, native Alaskans, cannery workers and landowners are seeking \$15 billion.

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WORLD BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Cuban star defects in Canada

TORONTO (AFP) — Star Cuban basketball centre Richard Matienzo defected here Thursday, saying he was tired of living in poverty to benefit the government.

Matienzo, here for the World Basketball Championships, requested political refugee status in Canada after leaving the Cuban delegation.

"I just decided there was pure abuse and pure exploitation for the goal of nothing. It was pure propaganda," Matienzo told the Toronto Star, which began looking after him once told of his situation.

The most valuable player and top scorer in Cuba's basketball league last season departed only with what he wore, shorts and a T-shirt plus basketball shoes. The paper paid for new apparel Thursday.

"I have more pride in being myself than I was ever granted by the government," Matienzo said. "For the first time in my life, I feel like a person and I deserve to live

for something other than the government."

Matienzo escaped late Wednesday with the help of Alfredo Jordan, a Toronto shop owner who came to Canada from Cuba 12 years ago. The departure fulfilled his other's request he depart their Havana shack, which he said had no bathroom or kitchen. Matienzo said he fears for the two sons, five siblings, mother and girlfriend he leaves behind.

"I'm worried the backlash will be tremendous, but I feel confident because this is what my family wanted," he said. "My family will take the burden that has to be taken. I had to walk away. My defection is going to create a lot of chaos. I believe the cheers of fans will be behind me all the way."

Matienzo follows his father Julio, who defected to the United States in 1980, and ex-Cuban centre Andres Guibert, who defected in Puerto Rico last year at a qualifying event for the world

finals. A total of 42 Cubans defected there.

Matienzo, 25, said he dreams of playing in the National Basketball Association (NBA) like Guibert, who played five games for lowly Minnesota late last season.

Matienzo played 164 minutes in Cuba's first five games here this week. Without him, Cuba lost 86-74 Thursday to Germany in a consolation round match, ensuring a bottom-four finish in the 16-team event.

"Our team, just like with a revolution, approached the game with conviction and strength and we went to play the game regardless of what happened," Cuha coach Miguel Calderon Gomez said.

Matienzo was last seen by Gomez while watching videotapes of Germany's game with Brazil.

"We have no information regarding him," Gomez said. "He left the hotel with some friends and has not come

back."

Brian Cooper, vice president of the tournament, said he was satisfied Matienzo departed without enticement and was safe.

"Contract was instigated by the player himself," Cooper said. "I felt very comfortable that he did this of his own free will. Without a doubt. Through our security forces we had a special immigration official on call 24 hours for such a situation."

"We certainly were not persuading or dissuading anyone. But we were prepared," Cooper said.

Matienzo's 94 points in five games were a team-high. His 25 rebounds were third-best on the club, and his 24-for-28 free-throw showing paces Cuba.

Matienzo, who stands 202 cm and weighs 96 kg, has been a member of the Cuban national team since 1990. He played against the original Dream Team in their first game at the 1992 Olympic qualifying tournament.

Cold war's end has not cooled ardour of U.S.-Russia match

TORONTO (AP) — The passage of time, the collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the cold war have cooled most of the passion that might otherwise accompany a U.S.-Russia basketball game.

"Not all of it. Reggie Miller, who probably doesn't know much about the first time the Americans lost to the Soviets in 1972, is thinking about a payoff for something more recent, last month's Goodwill Games."

"We're really looking forward to playing Russia," said Miller, whose 3-point shooting has started U.S. rallies in the last two games. "That's one game that was marked on our schedules before this began."

"We saw how they pushed around our young boys over there in Russia. We're sending in their big brothers. Let's see if they do all that pushing now."

The senior citizen of Dream Team II, Dominique Wilkins, was just 11 years old at the time of the controversial 1972 Olympics game in which the Soviet Union won in the final second. That defeat was so painful the U.S. players even today refuse to accept their silver medal.

Another loss to the Soviets in the 1988 Olympics was not so infamous; there was no doubt it was fair and square. But that defeat, as much as

any of the others by U.S. college players, led to the acceptance of NBA stars in international competitions like the world championship of basketball.

Dream Team II was to play Russia late Friday night in a game that's essentially meaningless, because both teams already have clinched berths in Saturday's semifinals. But a loss is unthinkable to the Americans, who are expected not just to win a gold medal, but to dominate.

"We don't hold any grudges," coach Don Nelson said after practice Thursday. "The '72 loss was hard to swallow, but in '88, we lost to a great Soviet team that just overmatched our best college players."

The U.S. team has won three of five games by more than 30 points, including the last two against Australia and Puerto Rico, which was considered a medal contender after winning the Goodwill Games. Russia and Croatia both are undefeated after five games, and Greece, the fourth semifinalist, is 4-1.

"History doesn't matter at this point," Nelson said. "We realise that Russia is a good team and capable of winning the gold medal. We regard them and Croatia as the best teams. We respect the Russian team. They are playing some of the best ball they have played in a long time. We are

taking that game very seriously."

In the quarterfinal round, while Dream Team II beat Australia by 56 and Puerto Rico by 51, Russia beat those same teams by 27 and 15 points.

"Russia is close to being as good as anybody in this tournament, with the exception of us, but we have to go out and prove it again," Nelson said. "We don't want to get a false sense of security now that we're playing higher-caliber teams."

Nelson's biggest problem so far has been keeping 12 NBA all-stars happy with their playing time. Dream Team I coach Chuck Daly, asked what advice he gave Nelson, said to him, "get a stopwatch."

"You can really only play 10 guys in a game, so there are going to be two unhappy people every game," Nelson said. "As a former player, I would rather not play at all than three or four minutes, and I considered doing that. But the coaching staff decided not to do that, so everyone usually has played at least a little bit."

But Wednesday night against Puerto Rico, captain Joe Dumars, who went into the game ranked third on the team in minutes with 21.3, did not play at all. He is the only player who hasn't appeared in every game.

Egyptian player tests positive for steroids

TORONTO (AFP) — Egyptian forward Ashraf Mohammadi tested positive for steroids here at the World Basketball Championships, officials said Thursday.

Ashraf was suspended for the remainder of the tournament for the violation. His steroid-laden urine sample was taken last Thursday, the opening day of the tournament, following a 102-74 loss to Puerto Rico.

Mohammadi faces a two-year suspension for his first infraction; with a second bringing a lifetime ban. The Egyptian delegation has the right to ask for a second test from another sample.

The performance enhancers were of little aid to the Egyptian team, which has lost all six games played so far. That included an 89-81 defeat Thursday at the hands of South Korea. Mohammadi did not play.

Mohammadi averaged six points a game and 20 minutes of playing time through five contests.



Al Faisali's captain Jamal Abu Abed raises the Cup Winners Cup after receiving it from His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah. Below, Al Faisali's goalkeeper Raed Ahmad catches the ball as players from both teams look on.



Faisali wins Cup Winners Cup

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Faisali Friday won Jordan's Cup Winners Cup title after beating Al Ramtha in a soccer match held at Al Hussein Youth City's Amman International Stadium in the presence of His Royal Highness Prince Abdullah, several officials and around 5,000 fans.

His Royal Highness presented the cup to Al Faisali's captain Jamal Abu Abed.

The match's only goal was scored the 55th minute of the match by Al Faisali's Jiryes Tador, season's top scorer.

The Cup Winners Cup match usually marks the beginning of the annual soccer competitions and is usually played between the winners of the League championship and the Jordan Cup tournament.

Al Faisali captured both titles last season and thus had to play the match with the Jordan's Cup runners-up Al Ramtha.

Sunday, the first of the season's championships, the Jordan Soccer Federation Shield, kicks off when Wihdat plays newcomers Kufri Soom and Jazireh meets Al Jeel.

Seville opens bidding for '99 world championships

HELSENKI (R) — Seville, where temperatures regularly reach 40 Celsius in the summer, has bid to stage the world athletics championships in 1999, Primo Nebiolo, President of the sport's governing body, said Friday.

Nebiolo, head of the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF), said at a news conference that the Spanish city, which hosted the 1991 world indoor championships, was the only definite bidder to date.

"There have been plenty of rumours about other cities bidding for the 1999 championships, including London, Paris and Athens, but Seville is the only one so far," he said.

Referring to a possible bid

from the French capital, Nebiolo said: "This is our dream because Paris is always Paris, no?"

But he conceded Paris might delay a bid until early in the next century because the soccer World Cup will be staged in France in 1998.

The decision on the 1999 event will be taken at next year's world championships in Gothenburg, Sweden.

The 1997 championships are set for Mexico City. Nebiolo also said the IAAF was considering expanding its grand prix series which has been sponsored by Mobil since 1985.

"We are studying the possibilities of including cities like New Delhi, Tokyo and Sydney on the calendar," he said.

Perec completes full circle at European Championships

HELSENKI, Finland (AP) — France's Marie-Jose Perec completed the circle with a lap around the track.

In 1990 as a beginner in the 400 metres, she scored her first success with a third in the European Championships. The following year she became World champion and the year after that she was the Olympic gold medalist.

Now she returned to the European meet and added the missing gold medal to her collection Thursday with an easy victory in 50.33 seconds. "It was the first gold medal for France here but they need more of them," Perec said.

It was a comeback of sorts for Perec. She fell out of favour with the French track authorities and moved to the United States to train in Los Angeles under famed coach John Smith. Then, in returning to France, she had a toe injury moving furniture and missed a couple meets, including the French championships.

Perec said she was motivated to do well after her teammate, Stephane Diagana, lost in the 400 hurdles. "Yesterday I felt sorry for Diagana," Perec said. "I hope this will boost France to more success."

With three victories in the three major championships, Perec said she may change events. "Maybe I will move to the 400-metre hurdles," Perec said. "I think I can really do something good there."

In other events, Irina Privalova of Russia became the first double winner as she captured the women's 200 title to go along with her 100 victory and Norway's Geir Moen took the men's 200 in 20.30. Britain's Linford Christie, the 100 champion, did not run the event.

Rodion Gataulin of Russia defended his pole vault crown with a top clearance of 6.00 metres in the place of the another top competitor, Sergei Bubka.

Congress looks at U.S. Olympic Committee handling of skater Tonya Harding case

WASHINGTON (AP) — It took 4 hours, 25 minutes, but a Senate committee finally asked the biggest Olympic question Thursday: Why didn't you get rid of figure skater Tonya Harding after she was implicated in the attack on rival Nancy Kerrigan?

"It was a blot on our history of participation in the Olympics," Sen. Ted Stevens told Harvey Schiller, the executive director of the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC). "But I guess it was unavoidable."

Coming late on a salty day on Capitol Hill, Stevens' statement was perhaps the most exciting moment in an afternoon of hearings on possible revisions of the Amateur Sports Act of 1978, the federal law that governs Olympic sports in the United States.

The Senate commerce committee heard from a dozen witnesses that the 16-year-old law is basically OK. But witnesses also said that Olympic community in the United States still contains too few women and minority

group members, does not police itself well and has done nothing to improve the deteriorating physical condition of the nation's children while churning out a few high-priced superstars.

The law, which Stevens wrote, helped clear up the mess of competing jurisdictions in U.S. amateur sports and gave the USOC sweeping powers to put together teams for the Olympics and other international sports events.

When the law was enacted, however, there had never been anything close to the soap opera of Tonya and Nancy.

Harding, of course, was allowed to compete in the winter games in Lillehammer, Norway, last February, despite USOC efforts to kick her off the Olympic team amid growing evidence of her involvement in the attack on figure skating rival Nancy Kerrigan.

Schiller said the USOC did all it could — or felt comfortably able to do — under its own bylaws and the law the committee was discussing.

Since the attack occurred



Tonya Harding

during the national figure skating championships, Schiller said, the USOC did not have direct control over Harding, even though those championships picked the Olympic figure skating team.

A blue-ribbon panel is reviewing the situation and is expected to recommend a code of conduct for all potential U.S. Olympians, Schiller said. Stevens applauded that

effort. "I support the concept of an Olympic code of conduct, an Olympian creed, something a person swears to," the Alaska Republican said. "It would deal with fair play and sportsmanship, and should provide instant censure as soon as the athlete doesn't live up to the code. The athlete would be expelled from the process."



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Cantona gets three-match ban

LONDON (AFP) — Eric Cantona has received a three-match suspension for his sending off in Manchester United's friendly match at Glasgow Rangers last week. However, the French captain will be available for United's Charity Shield match against Blackburn Rovers, the traditional curtain-raiser to the season, at Wembley Sunday.

The striker, already fined around £20,000 by his club, was dismissed by Scottish referee Andrew Waddell for a two-footed lunge at Rangers defender Steven Pressley.

Controversial Cantona had been booked for dissent only minutes before and there was doubt over whether he had been dismissed for the foul itself, or for a second bookable offence, which would have carried a shorter ban.

The bad news was confirmed when the Football Association contacted United

Friday, which means the striker will miss the opening match at home to Queens Park Rangers next Saturday and the games at Nottingham Forest and Tottenham the following week.

Cantona is further banned for United's first four games in the European Cup, having been seen off at the end of the ill-fated match against Galatasaray in Turkey last season.

United's England midfielder Paul Ince has recovered from a knee injury in time to take his place at Wembley.

Manager Alex Ferguson, who has allowed Republic of Ireland international Denis Irwin and Roy Keane time off to recover from the World Cup, will give £1.2 million defender David May his competitive debut against his former club.

May will replace injured England right back Paul Parker, with winger Lee Sharpe

switching to left-back. Blackburn are without Alan Shearer, Mike Newell and Kevin Gallacher up front, while England midfielder David Batty is a long-term absentee with a foot injury.

Manager Kenny Dalglish has not counted out five-million-pound man Chris Sutton, although the British record signing is struggling with a viral complaint.

Meanwhile, prospective striking partner Alan Shearer has denied rumours that he is suffering from the liver disease hepatitis A and could be out for months.

The England forward insisted he was the victim of an infection from eating undercooked seafood on holiday in Portugal, and said he could return to the game within days.

Shearer said: "I'm young and fit and already feel 100 per cent."

Italy appeals decision to scrub Monza race

ROME (R) — The Italian government Friday urged the International Motor Federation (FIA) to reverse its decision to cancel the 1994 Italian Grand Prix on safety grounds.

Cabinet under-secretary Gianni Letta wrote to FIA President Max Mosley on behalf of Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, appealing to the FIA to find a solution to ensure the race was run as scheduled Sept. 11.

FIA announced earlier Friday that the 65-year-old race had been removed from the calendar because of doubts over whether the Italian authorities would authorise the agreed safety work.

Plans to modify the track involve the felling of around 100 trees in a Royal Park and have sparked protests by environmentalists. An Italian government official this week refused to allow permission for work to begin.

Letta said the race could still be saved by building in "one or more chicanes" to reduce speed as had been done at other circuits.

Safety has become a priority in Formula One after Ayrton Senna of Brazil and Austrian Roland Ratzenberger died earlier this year during the San Marino Grand Prix in the Italian town of Imola.

In Italy, race organisers lambasted Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, who already faces a crisis as investors have taken fright at squabbling within his fractious coalition, for failing to ensure the Italian Grand Prix took place.

"This decision shows that the government has acted with complete irresponsibility," said Paolo Arrigoni, president of the Lombardy regional council.

In a meeting late Thursday, Arrigoni met cabinet under-secretary Gianni Letta, who promised the race would take place and presented a plan to make the track safer without cutting down trees.

"I don't know if the FIA have heard the appeal made by the government last night," Arrigoni said. "If not, then perhaps there is still time to change their minds."

"In any case, Berlusconi's reputation is riding on his ability to defend the grand prix," he said.

Monza mayor Aldo Molinari was equally harsh with the prime minister.

Germany's Schumacher takes pole position at Hungarian Grand Prix

BUDAPEST (R) — World championship leader Michael Schumacher Friday shrugged aside the controversy and problems surrounding himself and the Benetton team to claim provisional pole position for Sunday's Hungarian Grand Prix.

The 25-year-old German, showing all his familiar skill and commitment, clocked a best time of one minute 19.479 seconds on the twisting and dusty Hungarian circuit north of Budapest and gained the edge on rival Damon Hill.

Hill, the most serious threat to Schumacher's hope of hanging on to his runaway leadership of the drivers' title race, was second-fast ahead of his Williams team mate, fellow Briton David Coulthard.

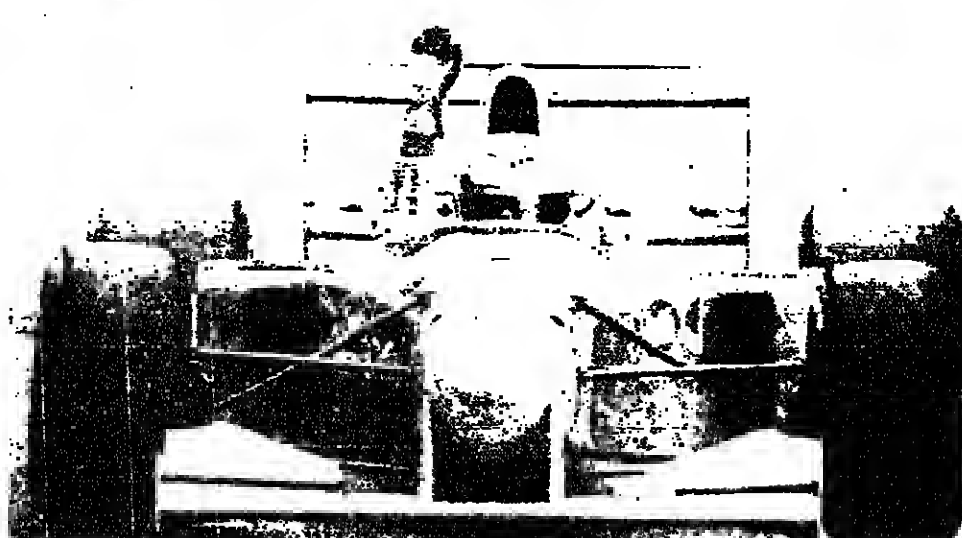
Coulthard shared the second row of the overnight grid with another Briton, Martin Brundle, who showed much-improved form in his Peugeot-powered McLaren.

Schumacher's display of authority will have done the Benetton team a power of good on a day when they issued yet another statement in their running argument with the ruling body, the International Motor Federation (FIA).

Benetton were charged Wednesday with tampering with their refuelling rigs and removing a filter before the German Grand Prix last month when Dutchman Jos Verstappen's car was engulfed in flames following a fire during a refuelling stop in the race.

But on Friday the team reiterated their contention that they had permission to remove the filter.

"The fuel filter removed from our refuelling system was done with the full knowledge and approval of the FIA technical delegate Charlie Whiting," Benetton said



Michael Schumacher

in the latest statement.

The FIA deny this and the French company which manufactured the system said Thursday that they would never have given such permission, on safety grounds.

Safety was also uppermost in the thoughts of FIA Friday, when it announced the cancellation of the Italian Grand Prix following a long-running row over the safety of the Monza Circuit (see separate story).

On the Hungarian, Verstappen, now recovered from the slight facial wounds he suffered in the blaze, claimed the sixth-fastest time in the opening session, just behind Austrian Gerhard Berger who was fifth-quickest for Ferrari.

For Schumacher it was vital to take overnight pole position not only to boost morale in the troubled Benetton team garages but also to ensure he has an excellent chance of winning Sunday's 77-lap race.

The Hungarian is a notoriously difficult circuit for overtaking as it is narrow, twisty and slow and has many

times in the past made life very difficult for faster cars attempting to find a way past a slow leader.

Alexi, who was quickest early in the session, Hill, who was also on top of the times twice during the hour, and Schumacher were well aware of the prize at stake.

It made for an intriguing session, run on a track drying fast after heavy overnight rain, in which Schumacher was able to cope with every challenge raised to his times.

Both Hill and Coulthard, who impressed on his first visit to the demanding circuit, spun off towards the end of the session as did Frenchman Philippe Alliot, who was driving for McLaren for the first time as replacement for the suspended Finn Mika Hakkinen.

Hill said: "I went off because I was trying to do a really hard and fast coming-in lap. I was on the radio too at the time so I may not have been concentrating properly."

"I would like to have been on pole but I am not too disappointed — at least I am on the front row."

Schumacher was delighted with his performance.

"First of all, I must say it's very nice to be back in front after all the problems the team has had recently. This is the best answer we can give to everyone."

"I'm very happy with my time because it was quite a struggle. For some reason the track was very slippery during my first run compared to this morning and I nearly lost the car."

"We made some changes and improved the car quite a lot for the second run. That's when I did my best time. I'm looking forward to tomorrow because we could not make as many changes as we would have liked today and we can improve the car further."

"To take provisional pole like this and under these circumstances is a big compliment to the team."

Coulthard said: "It is the first time I have driven here and it is a difficult circuit, very demanding both mentally and physically, so I am very happy to be third. If I can keep this place it will be my best grid position."

Navratilova upset in L.A. Virginia Slims

MANHATTAN BEACH, Calif. (AP) — Ann Grossman survived two match points and 46 degree Celsius (115 Fahrenheit) heat to beat no. 2 Martina Navratilova 4-6, 7-5, 6-4 Thursday in the third round of the Virginia Slims of Los Angeles.

Top-seeded Conchita Martinez of Spain routed Elena Likhovtseva of Kazakhstan 6-0, 6-0 in 49 minutes to advance to the quarterfinals.

Grossman's friends encouraged her with shouts of "no fear" after she lost the first set and faced two match points in the second set on the hardcourts at Manhattan Country Club.

"Sometimes when I play top players I get scared, but I knew if I kept the ball deep I had a chance," said Grossman, a six-year pro whose highest world ranking was no. 29 last summer. "She is a legend and I told her after the match that she gave me a gift today by making my dream come true."

Navratilova led 5-4 and had double match point on Grossman's serve when controversy developed. Navratilova's backhand service return was called long and umpire Donna Ring did not overrule, giving Grossman the advantage. Then Navratilova's forehand volley sailed long and Grossman tied the set 5-5.

"I never had a worse no-overrule in my life," said Navratilova, who argued briefly with Ring. "I didn't even have enough energy to get mad."

Navratilova said she only had about three hours sleep



Martina Navratilova

after playing a doubles match that ended at 11 p.m. Wednesday.

"I think it finally caught up with me. I just couldn't go," she said. "It's always hard to lose, especially the way I did."

Navratilova, 37, was making her final singles appearance in Manhattan Beach, where she won eight titles, including the last two years.

Grossman advanced to the quarterfinals against no. 5 Zina Garrison-Jackson, a 7-5, 1-6, 6-4 winner over no. 9 Nathalie Tauziat of France.

Likhovtseva beat Gigi Fernandez and no. 16 Pam Shriver in the first two rounds, but had no luck against Martinez.

She failed to capitalise on two break points against Martinez in the third game of the first set, and never mounted a challenge.

"I can't remember the last time I won love and love," Martinez said. "It was more me not making any mistakes."

Other winners Thursday were: No. 4 Jana Novotna of the Czech Republic over 13th-seed Patty Fendick 6-3, 7-5; no. 7 Julie Halard of France over Angelica Gavaldon 6-4, 6-3; no. 8 Sabine Appelmans of Belgium over Sandrine Testud of France 5-7, 6-1, 7-5 and Patricia Hy of Canada over no. 15 Kimberly Po, 7-5, 6-0.

Judge restores WBA title

PATERSON, N.J. (AP) — A middleweight regained his World Boxing Association (WBA) title Thursday, with a federal judge throwing the decisive punch.

The judge restored the title to John David Jackson, who had claimed the sanctions body used paper to do what 31 boxers couldn't do in the ring.

U.S. district judge Maryanne Trump Barry granted Jackson a preliminary injunction, barring the WBA from recognising anyone else as its middleweight champion.

She said a September trial would determine the case on

the merits, but granted the injunction because there was a likely chance of success and Jackson would suffer irreparable harm without it.

The WBA stripped Jackson of his championship after he fought May 6 in Atlantic City. It told Jackson and his promoter, Robert Goodman of Garden State Boxing, they needed permission for the non-title 10-round fight, said Jackson's lawyer, Patrick C. English.

"We found out that other champions did exactly what John David Jackson did and weren't stripped," English said.

A message left Thursday for WBA lawyer James J. Binn of Philadelphia was not returned.

Jackson, 31, of Los Angeles, is 31-0 with 8 knockouts. He has not defended his title since defeating Reggie "Sweet" Johnson Oct. 1 because of an injury and a lung infection, English said.

Jackson took the May 6 fight to get back in shape, English said, winning by a technical knockout in the eighth round over Jeff Johnson of Atlanta.

English contends WBA

championship committee chairman Elias M. Cordova Jr. took Jackson's title in an effort to arrange a fight Friday in Argentina between the two top-ranked WBA contenders.

Reggie Johnson, ranked first, is promoted by Don King, while the second-ranked middleweight, Jorge Castro, is handled by Luis Spada's Panaprom S.A.

Cordova and Spada are friends who have done business before, English said. The WBA is based in Venezuela.

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France sees low risk of attacks on its soil

Algerian group presents 6 demands, warns Paris against ignoring them

PARIS (Agencies) — France, faced with new threats by militants, on Friday stepped up a police crackdown on suspected Islamic activity though the government said there was little risk of domestic extremist attacks.

Interior Minister Charles Pasqua said that the risk of attacks was greater outside the country and a militant Algerian Islamist group threatened reprisals against French interests in Algeria unless Paris met six conditions.

The Armed Islamic Group (GIA), which claimed responsibility for killing five French nationals earlier this month in Algiers, said in a statement published on Friday that France would face "violent attacks on its interests in Algeria" if it failed to meet the conditions.

These included evacuating all French citizens from Algeria and ending its support for Algeria's military-backed government.

The group also ordered France to protect Muslim rights on its national territory, divulge the names of its officials "collaborating" with the Algerian authorities, cooperate with the GIA and compensate Muslims for losses suffered through French support for Algiers.

Mr. Pasqua, France's hardline internal security chief, told the French daily Le Figaro: "We do not believe there is a direct terrorist risk in France linked to the events in Algeria, but it is quite clear that we have to take precautions."

About 3,400 people were stopped overnight by police in Paris in the sixth day of a police crackdown after last week's slaying of five French officials in Algiers, for which the GIA claimed responsibility.

Police officials said their spot checks, which have affected more than 16,000 people so far in France, were taking place in a wider circle of cities.

While initially confined to the French capital, they were now under way on the high-

way leading to France's biggest international airport — Charles de Gaulle airport outside Paris, in Lyon, Bordeaux and Marseille in southern France, and in Lille in northern France, the officials said.

Eleven individuals were being questioned as a result of the latest police checks in Paris and two were taken in for questioning in Marseille, the officials said.

Twenty-two interned Algerians remained in custody at a military barracks in Folembert in northeastern France.

The roundup, ordered by Mr. Pasqua, has provoked sharp criticism from civil rights groups and opposition political leaders for targeting North Africans and having little or no connection to the violence in Algeria.

The Islamic Salvation Army (AIS), another Algerian group that is the military wing of the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), last week threatened reprisals unless the 22 interned Muslims were freed.

FIS activities in France are the apparent target of Mr. Pasqua's crackdown. The military-backed Algerian authorities banned the group and cancelled a general election in 1992 that the FIS was poised to win, triggering political violence in Algeria in which more than 4,000 people have been killed.

Mr. Pasqua told Le Figaro the widespread identity checks he had ordered were not directly linked to the Algerian attack but defended them as "a classic security measure."

Foreign Minister Alain Juppe endorsed Mr. Pasqua's handling of the police action but denied that France unconditionally supported the military-backed Algerian government and urged Algiers to return the country to democracy as soon as possible.

Mr. Pasqua has repeatedly dismissed international pressure on Algiers to reach out to moderate Muslims in search of a political settlement, arguing that France's only choice was to support an

admittedly undemocratic government or see Algeria fall into the hands of extremists.

In its demands issued Friday, the Armed Islamic Group demanded that all French nationals leave Algeria.

"France has committed great and vicious crimes against the Muslim Algerian nation," said the statement published on the front page of the London-based, Arabic-language newspaper Al Hayat.

The group said it has "confirmed information that elements in the French government were pressuring the ruthless tyrant (Algerian government) to carry out massacres against unarmed innocent people."

The group said it has "confirmed information that elements in the French government were pressuring the ruthless tyrant (Algerian government) to carry out massacres against unarmed innocent people."

It set a list of six demands, calling it "the third challenge."

— The French government should uncover those allegedly involved with the Algerian government's crackdown on fundamentalists in Algeria.

— Pay half the compensations to Muslims who have suffered since the crackdown began in Algeria.

— Stop supporting the Algiers' government and espouse neutrality in the Algerian conflict.

— Evacuate all French nationals from Algeria until the group allows their return under the Islamic Sharia law related to relations with non-Muslims.

— Payment of Jizyah, or tax Islamic Sharia law imposes on non-Muslims living under a Muslim system, to the Armed Islamic Group.

— Safeguard the rights and dignity of Muslims in France.

If the demands were not met, the group said, it will "strike forcefully at French interests in Algeria," according to Al Hayat.

Prince Hassan in Ma'an

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS Crown Prince Hassan is expected to visit Ma'an during a visit he paid to the southern town on Friday. The Crown Prince was given a tumultuous welcome by the town residents of Ma'an headed by Parliament members. The visit was part of a tour that the Crown Prince has been paying to the southern regions last week (see page three).



Argentina distances itself from alleged informer as Iran launches fresh tirade

BUENOS AIRES (Agencies) — Argentina distanced itself Friday from its sole witness linking Iran to an anti-Jewish attack, saying he had now suddenly turned up at the Argentine embassy in Ecuador but that it saw no need for contact with him.

"I don't know for a fact that this gentleman has asked for refuge in Argentina. Such a request would not make much sense," Vice Foreign Minister Fernando Petrella told local radio.

"As far as the (Argentine) Foreign Ministry is concerned I don't think any contact with the defector is necessary."

Manoucher Motamer, from Iran, is Argentina's only witness linking four Iranian officials to the July 18 truck-bombing of Jewish officials that killed nearly 100 people.

Relations between Argentina and Iran are at breaking point after an Argentine judge ordered an international manhunt for the four, who were fingered by Motamer when he was in Venezuela.

Iran summoned the Argentine charge d'affaires to the Foreign Ministry Friday for the third consecutive day over charges of Iranian involvement in the bomb attack, the official news agency IRNA said.

"He (the diplomat) is apparently here. I cannot give more information," a foreign ministry official told Reuters by telephone from Tehran. He gave no other details.

President Carlos Menem has threatened to kick out Iran's ambassador to Argentina and Foreign Minister Guido di Tella says Buenos Aires may even demand that Tehran hand over the four.

Motamer's identity and credentials have been disputed by Iran, which denies any involvement in the attack, and by the Venezuelan office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

The witness unexpectedly showed up at the Argentine embassy in Ecuador Thursday but only remained on the premises for an hour or so and was now in a hotel in Quito, Mr. Petrella said.

He offered no assistance, saying Motamer was under UNHCR protection.

Iran says Motamer, described by the Argentine judge as a disaffected former secretary in Iran's Ministry of Islamic Guidance, was in fact a shopowner in the city of Isfahan.

The UNHCR office in Venezuela, which was processing an asylum request by Motamer, said in a statement this week his identity and credentials were doubtful.

The Argentine supreme court was meeting again Friday after failing to agree in an all-day session Thursday on whether it should take over the case from investigating Judge Juan Jose Galeano, who issued the warrants for the four Iranians.

The supreme court is the only tribunal empowered to deal with cases involving foreign diplomats under the Argentine constitution. It must decide whether Mr. Galeano has enough of a case to warrant the top tribunal becoming involved.

Mr. Galeano's preliminary findings, published Tuesday, also mentioned current members of Iran's Buenos Aires mission as suspects, singling out Cultural Attache Mohsen Rabbani as having inquired in recent months about prices of vans like the one used in last month's attack.

Mr. Rabbani has acknowledged visiting used-car dealerships but says this does not link him in any way to what he describes as a criminal attack.

Meanwhile Paraguayan police have arrested a Lebanese national in connection with the bombing, officials said.

They added that there could be more arrests with the next 24 hours.

Police burst into the Arab-run Jebel Centre in this Paraguayan city near the Iguazu Falls, bordering Brazil and Argentina, and arrested 32-year-old Alkan Farad.

Farad has been living in Paraguay for two years and is wanted in Lebanon on swindling and check-bouncing charges, said Police Commissioner Domingo Ruiz Diaz of Interpol.

Investigating judges Carlos Monges and Hector Samaniego suggested there was evidence Farad may be linked to other crimes here and in Argentina.

Motamer has claimed he was deputy minister in the Iranian government.

COLUMN

U.S. veterans at last authorised to parachute

PARIS (AFP) — Five U.S. army veterans have been given permission to parachute over the Mediterranean Monday on the 50th anniversary of the World War II allied landings on the southern French coast, the Defence Department announced here. "The Ministry of Defence has suggested that the five veterans take part in a parachute drop into the sea, which will take place in the Bay of Calais, Aug. 15, in tribute to French troops in the army of De Gaulle," the ministry said in a communique. The Bay of Calais is located west of the southern port city of Toulon. General Jean de Latre de Tassigny commanded French North African troops in World War II. The ministry decision was intended to assuage the anger of the veterans who for security reasons had been refused permission to jump over the village of La Motte, the first community liberated from German occupation by allied troops 50 years ago next week. The five veterans were part of the 50th infantry-paratrooper battalion that landed near La Motte, behind German lines. French President Francois Mitterrand Sunday will launch a two-day commemoration of the Provence landings in which several heads of state, 130 planes and 33 warships from allied forces will take part.

Clinton requests dismissal of harassment suit

LITTLE ROCK, Arkansas (AFP) — President Bill Clinton filed a motion Wednesday in federal court to dismiss a former employer's sexual harassment lawsuit against him, pleading his presidential immunity. The request filed by Mr. Clinton's lawyers stated that Paula Corbin Jones could refile her lawsuit after he leaves office. Ms. Jones claims that Mr. Clinton made sexual advances to her in a hotel room in 1991 when he was governor of Arkansas and she was a state employee working on a business promotion meeting. A memorandum filed in support of the motion to dismiss stated that "there is an overriding national interest in insulating the presidency from the distractions of private civil litigation, and in assuring that courts do not unduly intrude upon the functioning of the chief executive." The memo cites a Supreme Court ruling in 1982 that gave President Richard Nixon immunity from civil suits.

Women pay price for ignoring abortion law

MOSCOW (R) — A Russian woman who did nothing after her husband paid the price when the dog chewed off both her arms, the Moscowsky Komсомолец newspaper said Friday. The dog turned on the 35-year-old woman in a park and bit her 53 times. "There was little left of her arms apart from bones," the newspaper quoted doctors as saying. The woman has been in hospital for the last two weeks in critical condition. The dog was shot the day after the attack. Her husband was still in hospital after the dog bit him in mid-July.

Section of Berlin Wall becomes monument in Germany

LISBON (AFP) — A slab of the Berlin Wall is to become a monument in the Fatima Sanctuary in memory of the unification of Germany, a spokesman for the sanctuary said Wednesday. The cult of Our Lady of Fatima is a religious organisation based on an apparition of the Virgin Mary to three shepherds in 1917. The slab of the wall, which is 3.6 metres (12 feet) high and weighs 2,600 kilograms (5,720 pounds) was offered by former East German Prime Minister Lothar de Maiziere in 1990 on the request of a Portuguese resident in the German city of Kaiserslautern. The inauguration will take place Saturday, the 33rd anniversary of the construction of the wall.

Israeli police warn PLO counterparts

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Jerusalem police said Friday they are investigating whether Palestinian police made arrests in Jerusalem after a Muslim-Christian brawl in the Old City.

They warned that Palestinian officers from the self-rule areas of Gaza or Jericho could be detained for overstepping their authority.

"Any police other than the Jerusalem police are illegal and banned by law," said police spokesman Shmuel Ben Rubi.

"Whoever identifies themselves as another kind of police with no legal authority granted by us will be arrested and prosecuted," he said.

The latest reports indicate Palestinian undercover units took suspects to Jericho for questioning following a series of Muslim-Christian clashes after a wedding in the walled Old City.

Israel is attempting to block any attempts by the Palestinians to operate branches of the self-rule government in Jerusalem to gain leverage in future negotiations over the city. Israel arrested six Palestinians who were attempting to police the Old City in June, charging them with burglary and assault.

Palestinian residents familiar with the latest incident said it erupted three weeks ago when members of the Abu Assab family in the Muslim quarter tried to get into a Christian wedding without invitations. They tried to force themselves in and four people were wounded in the ensuing brawl.

Some of the Muslims then went into the Christian quarter and beat up residents. The Israeli police made about 50 arrests and released everyone on bail, said the Palestinians, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

They said there was an initial reconciliation organised by community leaders. But the reconciliation failed and the Muslims then went back to the Old City.

Hamas claims Jerusalem attack

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — The Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) claimed responsibility for an attack on Friday in which three Israeli policemen were wounded in Arab East Jerusalem.

"A number of our fighters attacked one of the military posts of the Israeli army near Sheikh Jarrah (neighbourhood) and opened fire on three policemen," Izzeddine Al Qassam, Hamas' military wing, said in a statement faxed to an international news agency.

"This blessed operation comes to stress the Muslimness of occupied Jerusalem and to stress to all sides of the conflict in the area that this Holy City was and shall always remain Muslim," the statement said.

"The Palestinian flag will fly over Jerusalem for all the world to see," the statement pledged.

Police chief Assaf Hefetz told Israeli radio the group had been preparing an attack.

Israeli police said two full-time officers and a volunteer were shot and wounded when someone in a car they had stopped near the Old City of Jerusalem sprayed them with automatic weapons fire.

Police returned fire at the fleeing car.

Police later found the bullet-riddled car abandoned in East Jerusalem. Inside was a seriously wounded Arab youth.

Magazines for two automatic rifles and cartridges were found in the car, police said.

Israel's army radio said police were searching for three other people thought to have been in the car.

At one stage heavily armed police and paramilitary police cordoned off an East Jerusalem neighbourhood thinking they had trapped the suspects but the cordon was eventually lifted.

UAE leader gives Egypt \$7.4 million

ABU DHABI (AFP) — United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan has donated seven million dollars to medical and scientific centres in Egypt, the official news agency WAM reported Friday.

The sum covered heart, kidney, liver and cancer centres as well as the Alexandria and Al Azhar universities, it said in a report from Alexandria in northern Egypt, where the 77-year-old leader ended a visit on Friday.

Another \$400,000 were extended to an institute for the blind in Cairo, it said. The UAE, a key oil producer, is a major Arab aid donor. It has promised to contribute to a multi-billion-dollar Gulf development fund to provide aid to Egypt, Syria and other Arab countries.

Sheikh Zayed discussed his country's contribution in talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, according to Egypt's official news agency MENA.

Filali says OAU is a fiction

RABAT (R) — Moroccan Prime Minister Abdul Latif Filali said the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) is a fiction incapable of solving African problems like the civil wars in Somalia, Rwanda, Liberia and Angola. The OAU had "done nothing, made no proposals to solve these problems," Mr. Filali told interviewers on the state TV network RTM on Thursday night. "The OAU does not exist. It is a fiction," he said. Morocco has rejected suggestions that OAU representatives monitor a referendum in Western Sahara which the United Nations hopes to hold next February to decide whether the former Spanish colony will be part of Morocco or an independent state.

Morocco walked out of the OAU in November 1984 when the self-styled Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) proclaimed by guerrillas was made a member of the organisation. Since then it has maintained that the OAU has no role to play in Western Sahara because it is not impartial since it has taken the guerrillas' side against Morocco. Mr. Filali, who is also foreign minister, said he believed Polisario guerrillas fighting for independence of the territory since 1976 did not want a referendum and were trying to scuttle the U.N. plan by seeking to impose the OAU in the peace process.

NEWS IN BRIEF

European firms sign Gaza port deal

AMSTERDAM (R) — A consortium of European firms on Friday signed a deal with the Palestinian National Authority to build a harbour in the Gaza Strip provided it is funded by their governments, the Dutch consortium leader said. The deal also involves France's Spie Batignolle and Italy's Sistem Ingegneria Spa. Construction of the harbour will only go ahead if full financing for the \$60 million project is provided by the Dutch, French and Italian governments, consortium leader Ballast Nedam NV said in a statement. The Dutch government has promised 40 per cent of the financing on condition that the remainder can also be raised. "The harbour is viewed as of great importance to the development of the Gaza Strip," said Mr. Ballast, which had said earlier this week it hoped to sign the accord. The harbour will be laid in a shallow coastal zone a few kilometres south of Gaza. It will initially be able to accommodate small ships of up to 5,000 gross tonnes and can be extended in a later phase to handle 15,000-tonne vessels. German construction group Hochtief AG owns a 48 per cent stake in the Dutch company.

UAE leader gives Egypt \$7.4 million

ABU DHABI (AFP) — United Arab Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan has donated seven million dollars to medical and scientific centres in Egypt, the official news agency WAM reported Friday. The sum covered heart, kidney, liver and cancer centres as well as the Alexandria and Al Azhar universities, it said in a report from Alexandria in northern Egypt, where the 77-year-old leader ended a visit on Friday. Another \$400,000 were extended to an institute for the blind in Cairo, it said. The UAE, a key oil producer, is a major Arab aid donor. It has promised to contribute to a multi-billion-dollar Gulf development fund to provide aid to Egypt, Syria and other Arab countries. Sheikh Zayed discussed his country's contribution in talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, according to Egypt's official news agency MENA.

Filali says OAU is a fiction

RABAT (R) — Moroccan Prime Minister Abdul Latif Filali said the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) is a fiction incapable of solving African problems like the civil wars in Somalia, Rwanda, Liberia and Angola. The OAU had "done nothing, made no proposals to solve these problems," Mr. Filali told interviewers on the state TV network RTM on Thursday night. "The OAU does not exist. It is a fiction," he said. Morocco has rejected suggestions that OAU representatives monitor a referendum in Western Sahara which the United Nations hopes to hold next February to decide whether the former Spanish colony will be part of Morocco or an independent state. Morocco walked out of the OAU in November 1984 when the self-styled Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR) proclaimed by guerrillas was made a member of the organisation. Since then it has maintained that the OAU has no role to play in Western Sahara because it is not impartial since it has taken the guerrillas' side against Morocco. Mr. Filali, who is also foreign minister, said he believed Polisario guerrillas fighting for independence of the territory since 1976 did not want a referendum and were trying to scuttle the U.N. plan by seeking to impose the OAU in the peace process.

Morocco offers cheap plant sites

RABAT (R) — Cheap factory sites on 1,200 hectares are to be made available to new investors in Morocco, the official news agency MAP reported on Friday. The agency quoted Prime Minister Abdul Latif Filali as saying in a TV interview on Thursday night that the sites equipped with utilities would be made available at between 250 and 300 dirhams (\$28 and \$33) a square metre. This is less than a tenth of the current going price for land in the industrial quarters of Casablanca where most of the country's factories are concentrated. Mr. Filali said the decision was taken after consultations with the businessmen's association (CGEM), which complained that production costs were heavily penalised by exorbitant land prices.

Three beheaded in S. Arabia

RIYADH (AP) — A Saudi Arabian convicted of murder and two Pakistanis who tried to smuggle drugs hidden in their intestines were beheaded Friday, the interior ministry announced. The Saudi, Yehya Ben Ali Al Mawallid, was found guilty by an Islamic Sharia court of shooting to death another Saudi in a dispute, the announcement said. He was beheaded in Abha in the southwestern province of Asir. The Pakistanis — identified as Ursul Khan Mialli Khan and Akhtar Mohammad Sultan Jamal — were beheaded in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, the announcement said. Saudi Arabia rules by Islamic law, which prescribes beheading for convicted criminals. That was extended to drug smugglers in 1987 in a ruling by the kingdom's Muslim theologians. Some 90 beheadings were carried out last year and so far this year, nearly 20 people have been executed. The executions are carried out in public squares outside mosques following noon prayers on Friday.

Most Israelis want Arabic in school

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Most Israelis want Arabic taught in school as a compulsory subject because of the progress toward peace in the Middle East, according to a survey published Friday. The poll in Yediot Aharonot newspaper found that 66 per cent were in favour and 34 per cent against. Arabic is an official language in Israel, along with Hebrew. But it is taught in secondary school only as an optional subject, unlike English which is compulsory. According to the same poll, more than one million Israelis out of a population of 5.2 million would want to visit Jordan once the border was opened. Thirty-five per cent of the 600 Jews questioned said they would visit. A first crossing point between the two countries was opened on Monday, initially only for foreign tourists.

Wanted... snakes

SIR BANI YAS, the United Arab Emirates (AFP) — Hunting for snakes on the tiny Gulf island of Sir Bani Yas can be a lucrative business, bringing rewards of up to 110 dollars a piece. Workers on the island, the largest nature reserve in the region, have been told they would be rewarded for every snake they kill. The rewards offered by United Arab Emirates President Sheikh Zayed Bin Sultan Al Nahayan range between 200 and 400 dirhams (\$55-\$110), depending on the size of the reptile. "The rewards are intended to protect the animals in the reserve so they will continue to increase," said a worker on the island.